THE MAN OUTSIDE THE CHURCH

AND OTHER SERMONS

ABBOTT

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THE MAN OUTSIDE THE CHURCH

BY THE SAME AUTHOR:

"Help from the Hills"
"Sparks from a Parson's Anvil"

The Man Outside the Church

and Other Sermons

By
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Milwaukee
The Young Churchman Co.
1917

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1917

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DEDICATION.

This Little Book is Dedicated

By an Ever Grateful "Son in the Faith"

To the Fragrant Memory of

JOHN PHILIP DuMOULIN, D.D., D.C.L.,

Late Bishop of Niagara, Canada.

AN ELOQUENT PREACHER OF RIGHTEOUSNESS,
A FAITHFUL SHEPHERD OF THE SHEEP COMMITTED TO HIS CHARGE,
AND A TRUE SERVANT OF JESUS CHRIST, WITHOUT FEAR OF
HUMAN CENSURE OR REGARD FOR EARTHLY PRAISE.

FOREWORD

THE accompanying Sermons deal with the practicalities of the Christian Life. Their only virtue—if virtue they possess—lies in their simplicity, and in the patent fact that they are devoid of doctrinal definition.

The Discourses are addressed to the average person who sits but lightly in the pew, and to the stimulation of the over-worked Preacher who would relate his weekly message to the intelligence of the business-wracked worshipper who is physically incapable of extraordinary mental effort on "the one day's rest in seven".

It is hoped that the obvious imperfections of the following pages will be overlooked in the earnest desire of the author that they may minister, under God, to the spiritual edification of the Reader.

ALMON ABBOTT.

Trinity Cathedral, Cleveland, Ohio.

A WORD TO THE MAN OUTSIDE THE CHURCH

THE average man, the man with whom one has dealings in society and in business, is not interested in the Church. He has some hard things to say about Organized Christianity. He stands avowedly, and somewhat self-complacently, outside the Church—to the relative impotency of the Church, and to the emasculation of his own religious influence.

The Man Outside the Church has many things to say. He is quite frank about the reasons which prevent his joining the Church, and he is ready at any time to justify his attitude to all enquirers. Let us enumerate a few of his statements.

(1) *"A man may be a Christian without joining the Church."* This is, of course, an obvious thing to say, and it is more or less true. One may be a Christian of Sorts outside the Church, one may perform many Christ-like deeds; but one cannot be the best kind of Christian outside the Church. We are living upon the benefits of dif-

fused Christianity. The atmosphere of our thought, individual, domestic, social, and governmental, is a Christianized atmosphere; but atmospheric Christianity is not enough. We need a touch of definiteness in all things, and it is hardly honest to accept benefits and yet to make no personal acknowledgment of the source from whence the benefits flow.

It is possible for me to be a Free Mason of Sorts by living upon the benefits of diffused Free Masonry. I can be charitable, self-sacrificingly charitable, toward all men, and captious toward none. But to be a Free Mason in the fullest sense of that much-abused term I must be initiated into the mysteries of Free Masonry, and place myself in living touch with the channels of its life. So to be a Christian in utmost fact I must ally myself with The Body of Believers, with The Society of Christians; think as they think and know as they know; and be corporately strengthened by association with like minded Enthusiasts.

Let us look at it from another angle. No man would suggest the advisability of closing down all the Houses of Worship in this and in all lands. He admits, any man admits, that with all their imperfections the Churches of Christendom are serving to keep alive Christianity in the hearts and minds and consciences of men. Truth, Christian and otherwise, as a matter of philosophy and observation, may only be perpetuated through organization,

and to close all the Homes of God in the Christian world would ultimately end in the perversion, if not in the disruption, of the Christian Evangel. Is it logical, then, to disassociate oneself from that which is confessedly essential to the maintenance of Christianity?

(2) *Men say, and this is wrapt up with the foregoing, "that they are frightened off by the Hypocrites in the Church."* They are assured of the fact that they are not hypocritical themselves, and they would be careful of the company which they keep! Now let us admit, for the facts in the case demand such admission, that there are hypocrites in the Church; that there are many hypocrites, clerical and lay, and that there always have been, and that there always will be. Human nature is human nature, and the Christian Ideal is a high ideal, and we are told on divine authority that the "wheat and the tares shall grow together until the harvest." But let us also remember and admit—the facts in the case demand such remembrance and admission—that there are Saints in the Church, Saints, clerical and lay, and many of them; that there always have been, and that there always will be. This self-evident truth is apt to be lost sight of by the Man Outside the Church. I have met more good people—and from intimate experience of the inner workings of organized Christianity my testimony counts for something—people who

estimated earthly things as dross that they might eventually be found in the likeness of Christ Jesus their Lord, inside the Church than I have discovered outside the Church. This is to be expected, and an innumerable company of men bear witness to the fact that the expectation is abundantly justified. But this objection to joining the Church, that there are so many hypocrites within the Church, is based upon a fundamental misconception. The Church is not a Society for Saints; it is a Society for Sinners who desire, gradually, very gradually, to become Saints. It is a world within the world; an association of those who are not as good as they ought to be, and well might become, and who desire to place themselves in the most propitious environment for the production of righteous character. In the Church there are those who are at the very beginning of their improvement; men and women who are fighting with wild beasts at Ephesus; and who are constantly, or at least intermittently, "bested" in the perpetuated warfare of the flesh against the spirit. The average man inside the Church "counts not himself to have apprehended, he does not esteem himself as one who has already attained, either were already perfect". Morning and evening he confesses himself to be "a miserable sinner" and "to have done the things that he ought not to have done", and "to have left undone the things that he ought to have

done". Saints do not speak in that language. When a man joins the Church he does not shout from the house tops, "I am holier than thou"; he says in effect, "I need all the help that I can get; so I am entering the Hot House of Christian growth."

Surely, then, to this degree and extent Hypocrisy within the Church may be forgiven—or, if not forgiven, understood. But the nature of the case we presume Hypocrisy, and our presumption is not disappointed! Whenever a man puts forward this time-worn objection I always feel like saying, and, as a matter of fact, I sometimes do, "Come along, O Virtuous Brother, and make one hypocrite the more!"

But, there is more to be said in this connection. It is not the army that should obsess our consciousness. It is the Cause for which the army fights. There is a Book which all should read. The title is *Kitchener's Mob*. Kitchener's Mob was a mob in truth. Laborers, mechanics, artisans, clerks, shop-keepers, merchants, and professional men suddenly called upon to enter the field of military duty fresh from the spade, the machine, the desk, the counter, the office, and the study. A disorderly mob; a mob with little, if any, idea of discipline; an aggregation of men to whom the profession of arms was a new thing in the world. What would you have thought of the patriot who looked at such

a collection of incompetents and said, "Well, England is hard pressed: but I refuse to associate myself with such an array of humanity as that. It is not an army, but a rabble, and an ill-assorted rabble, too. My self-respect forbids enlistment." Surely, you would say, "Fastidiousness in a coward is not becoming!" The cause was, and in the same connection still is, everything. The question was, and the question still is, "what is the army fighting for? If the cause is just, to join the army is a 'man's job', and the greater the number of incapables in the ranks the greater the need of capables such as I." The cause for which the Church fights is the Cause of Jesus Christ. There is ever the mob within the Church; ever the raw recruits; ever the enlisting of new and inexperienced soldiers beneath the Banner of the Cross; but "we fight against Principalities and Powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world".

(3) *Men say, "Granted that I ought to link up with the Church, I hesitate to do so because there are so many different Denominations of Christians that I do not know which Denomination to join."* That is a specious excuse, but the fact remains that it is specious, and an excuse. There is one army; but there are many regiments. How does that look? The denominations are all fighting for a new Heaven and a new Earth wherein dwelleth righteousness; they are all working, in season and

out of season, for the same triumphant achievement —that the Kingdoms of this world may become the Kingdom of Our Lord and of His Christ. Whatever the battle cries; whatever the flags unfurled; whatever the confused din of the conflict; the army, numerous as are the battalions and regiments and brigades, is engaged in the same offensive. It is storming the citadels of Sin and Satan and death.

Beneath all uniforms, and diversified terms of enrollment, and the apparent smartness or dowdiness of the rank and file in this department and in that; far below all catch words, and doctrinal formulae, and external differentiations, the army is one, and it were better to belong to any corps than to stand outside and see the hosts sweep by. As Rupert Brooke said, "Well; if Armageddon is on I suppose it is a man's place to be there." The Spiritual Armageddon, speaking untechnically, is ever on, and woe to the man who sidesteps his "call to the colors".

Such, then, are some of the things that the man outside the Church says about the wisdom, or advisability, of coming inside the Church. He tabooes Organized Christianity because in his opinion it is possible to be a Christian and not join the Church; because there are so many hypocrites in the Church; and because the Denomina-

tions of Christians are so numerous that it is difficult to select one denomination in preference to another.

* * *

Now, why have I taken the trouble to say all this; and wherein lies the pertinency of remarks such as these?

My motive is this: I want to persuade those of you who have been resting upon this pile of plausibilities to reopen the whole question, and to conscientiously determine whether or no you have given the matter sufficient consideration.

The fight is on; the fight is on in living earnest, and we who are affiliated with the Church, and with the work of the Church, realize that we cannot, humanly speaking, carry the warfare far into the enemy's country and achieve the ultimate victory without your devoted assistance; without the professed and actualized enthusiasm and coöperation of all those who account Jesus Christ the Friend above all other friends. Summing up our prospects we see that the man outside the Church is so often the man whom we need inside the Church; and that the recruits whom we crave are the whole-souled, kingly-qualitied men who are, so far as the Church is concerned, "passing by on the other side". We call to you, and endeavor to attract your attention, my brothers, as you "pass by" across the

street from us, and tell you that our God-Blessed and Christ-Generaled Army is weak without you, and that we shall never muster our full strength until you have thrown in your lot with us, and have begun to "do us good".

THE WELLS OF LIFE *

Genesis 26: 20-23. Esek, Sitnah, Rehoboth, Sheba.

THESE are the names of the wells of Isaac in the valley of Gerar. Our subject to-day is *well-digging.*

It is the middle of winter. Isaac and his companions are in a place through which the summer torrents poured. The springs have all dried up, the musical brooks have sung themselves to sleep, and there is a scarcity of water. The Israelites are athirst, and in self-defence they set to work to remedy the difficulty. They dig deep down into the ground, and find that for which they are in search, drink for their parched throats and fevered lips. Hardly, however, have they begun to quench their thirst when the well is snatched away from them by roaming hordes of Philistines who are in search of water, too. These men with the insolence of superior force assert "the water is ours". And Isaac, the meek and gentle son of Abraham, called the well *Esek,* meaning strife.

* This sermon is based upon a study by Dr. Joseph Parker.

An old story, my friends, or rather the ancient preface to an oft-repeated tale; for it sounds strangely familiar, and it has a smell of immortality about it. We are all well-diggers. Water is sometimes woefully scarce in life, and we are thirsty creatures by nature and education. We have all digged this first well of Isaac; the well *Esek,* strife. We start out in our business or profession, we embark upon a social career, and we strike water; a refreshing stream of recognition and success. Then, behold, the Philistines have come along, the greedy, thirsty, big-mouthed Philistines, and we lose what we had gained.

If men and women find water they will not be left alone; be quite sure of that; they must pay the penalty of their ingenuity. In a stupid world individual cleverness will not be tolerated for a moment. If Isaac's men had discovered nothing but hard rock the inhabitants of Gerar would never have spoken to them, nor disputed their occupation; they could have drunken to their thirsts' full content. It is what we find that excites the surprise and the cupidity of those who are not in sympathy with us. If you plunge your hand into the tempestuous wind and pluck nothing out of it save air your unkindest neighbor will not molest you; he will let you rest in peace; whilst a smile of beatific benevolence will illumine his weather-furrowed face. But if you bring back news of wells

and mines and fruit trees and plentiful harvests; if the paean of victory and the chant of praise is sounding in your ears, then beware. You will be blackguarded for your popularity; your motives will be maligned, and a river of innuendoes will flow through the ranks of your contemporaries. If you take this view of life it will help you to equanimity, and serve to bolster up your tottering strength and self-respect. Success is unpopular in exact ratio to the prevalence of failure, and the over plus of mediocrity. Envy, malice, and all uncharitableness are a vindication of the superior quantity and quality of water in your well. You have achieved *Esek*, strife.

And now what did Isaac do? He said, "let us pass on and find another well." He was a philosopher, was Isaac. It is a pity that the higher critics are doing away with such a shining pattern for every age. He wasted no time over useless haggling; he realized that discretion was the better part of valor. And so his workmen, no doubt with many a muttered oath, for workmen are not overfond of work, unlocked their bags of tools, and set to digging once more. Again their labors were rewarded with success, and the sparkling water welled up from its hidden recesses. We may imagine the laughter and the joyous repartee as

they cast themselves down in fatigued abandonment, and quaffed the rippling cup. Their satisfaction, however, was soon disturbed, and they sprang to their feet in terrified affright as the well-known cries and imprecations of the malevolent Philistines smote upon their ears. History repeats itself, and this oasis even as the former is wrested from their grasp. And Isaac called the name of that well *Sitnah,* meaning hatred.

So is it ever. After Esek we have gone ahead and found water once more. Success with its enfolding mantle has after months or years enwrapped us as in days of yore. It is doubly precious because we have had the harrowing contrast. But alas our ecstasy is short-lived. One success in the eyes of the world may be forgotten if not forgiven, but two successes are unpardonable. At the first offence there may be mere strife, contention of a worthy sort; at the second offence there is the sinister frown, the detestation, the overcharging hatred. To such a pass, as experience proves, is human feeling driven by the sight of another's repeated success.

Are you the Philistine; is envy your besetting sin? Let us beware of it. It hinders prayer, it befogs heaven, it dries up the fountain of charity in our hearts, and turns the crystal water into poison. It takes the angel out of us, it slays our very soul, it chokes the sweet song in our throats, and turns the milk of human kindness into gall and

bitterness. It may seem to be expending itself upon the outward object, but in reality it is ruining the life of the envious one. It's disaster is subjective. We may pity Isaac, but if we are long sighted enough our utmost compassion will go out to the envious Philistines.

Poor Isaac, we say, his long suffering patience must have been sorely tried. What was his behavior upon the occasion of this second rebuff? Why, Isaac had a sweet nature, what we call a good-tempered disposition, he was not soured as most of us would have been. He did not know how to be sulky; he refused to woo himself into self-congratulatory slumber by the happy pessimism of adverse circumstances. "He removed from thence and digged another well." Surely having digged two wells, and having been driven away from both of them, he had some cause for a pouting of the lips, a hanging of the head, and a groaning out of bitter words. But Isaac's motto was excelsior. "He removed from thence and digged another well." And for that the Philistines strove not, and he called the name of it *Rehoboth.* That is *room;* a place to stand in.

After *Esek,* and *Sitnah* the sons of men who have will power and determination start in business once more, hang up the sign of their profession

where all may see, and, nothing daunted, fight the ceaseless battle of their ambition. It takes a man who is a man, a woman who is a woman, to do this. To dig one well is weary work, but to dig three wells is almost superhuman. There are those, however, who along with Isaac have done this thing. This is the secret of fame; this is the safeguard of enduring success.

Rehoboth, that is the well that we want above all other wells. That is the water which if we drink of it will never permit us to thirst again. Esek and Sitnah were not our rightful wells; we were intended for greater things. The world is bigger than any part of it, the universe is larger than any section of its crust; if we are driven away from this place, or that place, we may find a better place to dig a well. That is the way to wear out an enemy; that is the way to conquer an envious population. Hatred and strife have their surrenders. The Philistine herdsmen are not peripatetic for the space of a thousand miles. Rehoboth, *room,* an area where we can fling out our arms, and stand on our head, and kick our heels together, if we will. There is a place for everything, and everything in its place; there is a round hole for every round peg. There is, as Isaac and Herbert Spencer alike assert, a correspondence with environment, a position which calls out our best power, and unloosens our dormant possibilities.

Some people have a long and tiresome search for Rehoboth; but when they find it you would not know them for the same individuals—life has begun, hope is consummated, and work is play. This is the will of God for you and me; our beautiful home, our happy family, our prosperous business, our joying Christianity. When this well is digged it is only after strife and hatred, but our endurance of these conditions has vindicated our right to live, and even acrimonious Philistia has a word of praise. She remembereth no more the wells of Sitnah and Esek for joy that a man is born into the world.

After this Isaac digs another well; he has the habit, and good habits are as strong as bad. "And Isaac's servants came and told him that they had found water, and he called it *Sheba*". That is an oath; a blessing settled forever. Noble Isaac, he knew not only how to work, but how to praise. He was thankful as well as energetic. When he had reached the satisfaction of his dreams he was grateful to God; he lifted his hands toward heaven, and offered himself and his success as an evening's sacrifice.

This last well is a well that few people dig. Their attitude is, "the might of mine own right arm hath gotten me this victory." But, unless we would be ingrates, after Rehoboth we must dig

another well; a covenant betwixt us and God. We must join the House of Aaron, and say, "His mercy endureth forever."

Such, then, is the normal course of human life. Strife, hatred, a place to live in, and a striking of the hands together in holy covenant. Happy indeed is the consummation; worth, well worth, the buffeting.

It was all exemplified in Jesus Christ, the second Isaac. He came to His own and His own received Him not, *Esek*. He came again and He was despised and rejected of men, *Sitnah*. He came again and He is to-day finding room within the hearts of men, *Rehoboth*. He is coming again and He will realize the oath, the covenant, that He shall have the heathen for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession, *Sheba*.

Wells—I like the word. It is full of music. Wells, "with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." "Whosoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into eternal life."

"Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." Whosoever *will* may come. The invitation is ours. We are not satisfied with earthly waters, for, *our souls are athirst for the living God.*

NEVERTHELESS

St. Luke 5: 4-5. "Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing; nevertheless, at Thy word I will let down the net."

NEVERTHELESS—it is the speech of moral heroism; it is the language of sovereign conquest. It is the word which has initiated great reforms, and consummated mighty achievements. Nothing great and good has ever been formulated, and achieved without it. "We have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing—*Nevertheless.*" It was the determination to wring success out of defeat, and to make the night of failure minister to the dawn of hopeful endeavor.

The Sea of Galilee had refused to unburden its wealth of riches. The fishermen, who through years of experience knew its waters from shore to shore, had cast their nets from sundown to sunrise in the most likely places, places where heretofore the fish were wont to congregate, and emptiness, not fulness, had crowned their repeated efforts.

"They had toiled all the night, and had taken nothing." Simon and his companions were tired out. There is no toil so arduous as fruitless toil; there is no labor so exacting as labor that brings no results. The hardest work of all work is the looking for work. The fishermen were disgusted, as well they might be; hours of netting, of rowing their craft from shore to shore, and nothing to show for it. They were not amateurs, they were professionals, fishing was their livelihood, and Peter would go home to his faithful wife and expectant children, empty handed.

In solemn, but ominous silence, they have beached their boat, and are washing their nets. There is compensate joy in washing the nets when they are filled with the scales of a mighty catch, but it is a burdensome affair to wash the nets when the meshes are unstained by captive, squirming fishes. The fishermen were dispirited, and worked in sullen apathy.

Then upon the shore beside them appears Jesus. He says, "Let down your nets for a draught." Apparently He is unaware of the resultless search, and yet, when He speaks, He ever speaks to some purpose. Peter, the spokesman, makes reply, "Master, we have toiled all the night and have taken nothing, *Nevertheless* at Thy word I will let down the net." It is the decisive answer of a brave man. He will not let the past over-

shadow the future. To-day in its possibilities must not be chained to the failure of yesterday. The morning must not be the bondslave of the night.

"Nevertheless—I will." Brave Simon. And his courage was crowned with success. Under the guidance of Jesus the deeps were made to give forth their storehouse, and the directed nets enclosed a multitude of fishes, so that they began to break.

And we, like Simon, have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing. We have tried and tried again, and the issue has been failure. We have agonized even unto blood, and the months and years that have gone have brought us null and void to the verge of the present day. We are sick of it all; wearied unto death. We shall give up trying, cease from repeated effort, from perpetuated heartbreak; beach our boat, fold up the nets, turn our back upon the useless toil, and go home.

Is not this our attitude in respect of sin—of spiritual advancement—of worldly promotion—of the approximation of our souls content? We have toiled; Ah God how we have toiled, and it has been a toiling through the night, and we are none the better but rather the worse, none the richer, but rather the poorer, none the happier, but rather the sadder. We have taken nothing, nothing. We shall give up the striving, cease from laborious struggle, take our ease and let the world roll by.

My friends, the only failure is the armchair attitude. The only despair is the despair of inaction. The only damnation is to let what has been become the overruling tyrant of what is and of what is yet to be. Only so may we be a slave; fettered to the galley of the past.

When are we in the throes of such a hopeless condition; when is our failure a failure writ in uncials; when are we cast as drifting derelicts upon the shores of uselessness?

When we permit the moral disaster of the past to determine our future destiny: To toil all the night and to take nothing, and to let that experience vitiate the opportunities of to-day, is irremediable misfortune; it is to bow down to the past, and to treat it as a god. It is to be the bondslave, shackled and manacled, of a hopeless Siva; the god with a hundred hands, each containing a thunderbolt.

Are you in such a condition? You have come to realize in one of the interludes of existence that there is a passion which for years has been working devastation in your life. By passion, I do not merely mean animal passion; there are passions that draw us with silken threads as well as with cartropes; with gossamer gause as well as with cables; passions of vanity, or pride, or illicit ambition. You have taken issue with the monster, and have resolved to oust his influence. You have made good resolutions, and, when you made them

you meant them. But, you have made little headway against your besetting sin; for, alas, passion is imbued with the subtlety of Satan its master. Passions come dancing into our lives like kittens. We play with them; they play with us. They come dancing in and dancing out again. Such harmless little kittens; soft and purring to the touch; gentle and enticing. But — the time goes on, and they come as tigers, and they come to stay.

The keeper at the Zoo tosses a lion cub up into the air, and catches it in his arms. Just a cub; a sweet, soft, fluffy cub; up it goes, and down it comes. But, the keeper will not do that two years hence; for the cub has grown meanwhile, and is a beast with teeth that bite, and claws that pierce, and a voice that issues in frightening roar.

So is it with our passion. It came so softly; it danced into our life, and it danced out again. It was such a playful passion; so amenable to reason; so capable of subjugation at our wish, and word of command. But, the passion has grown; it has developed with our life; it is a beast to be reckoned with; and we instead of mastering it are in a fair way of being mastered by it. It is the *periodicity* of passion which constitutes its thraldom. It comes, and it goes; it comes, and it goes. To-day it has left us; how virtuous we are! Its retrospect is loathsome; we trample the recollec-

tion beneath our feet. We are free; arbiters of our own destiny; how could we ever have given hospitality to the monster? We make all sorts of good resolves. But, here it comes again; its periodicity has returned. The passion is upon us once more in full and burning force. All our fences are broken; our ramparts are destroyed; our trenches are occupied; and resolutions fade away. The passion conquers, enthralls, intoxicates, and once more we fall. The periodicity of passion; ah, there is its sting, and there its perpetuated tyranny over our disaster strewn lives.

Well; you have toiled all the night against your passion, and have taken nothing; you would beach the boat, return homeward, bolt the door, and sleep the hours away. You permit the moral disaster of the past to determine your future destiny. This, and this alone, is failure. But, even yet there come softening seasons. I have a little patch of ground. In the spring time I plant tender little saplings. The rain gives them drink; the sun nurtures them with its warming rays; they appear above the earth. I tend them carefully, I rake and weed. But as the weeks go on my interest in the saplings diminishes. There is a drought. I forget to water them. Poisonous growths grow up beside them; I cease to cull and hew; the saplings die. The plot of ground is a

patch of death. So, into our lives come softening seasons. The new year, when the solemnity of passing time overawes us for a while. What seedlings we plant of good resolve; of resolute determination to master the master who masters us. A loved one dies; sorrow tills the sterile soil of our lives. Its soft touch brings growths to light; growths which we had deemed dead in childhood's days. But time moves on; sorrow comes to be accepted as an accomplished fact, and weeds spring up, the drought of inaction paralyzes our resolves, and the tender saplings are bent, and withered, and withering, die. *What does this mean?* It means that behind us we have a patch of dead wood; a mine of dissipated energy. It is a perilous thing. We look back; we tried and failed. We look ahead, if we try again we are bound to fail again. The moral disaster of the past becomes our tyrant, and we permit it to determine our future destiny. *But,* modern Simons that we are, what does the Master say? "Launch out into the deep—the old deep—and let down your nets for a draught." The night is past; the sun is risen; the earth is gilded with a new flooded radiance; the morn, the new morn, the morn never seen before, is come. Away with the defeat of yesterday, all hail the privileges of to-day. "Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing. *Nevertheless,* at Thy word I will let

down the net." The defeat of yesterday under Christ's manipulation is intended to minister to the success of the future. *Arise,* disciple of the *Nevertheless;* apostle of the Living God.

THE STORY OF ELISHA MODERNIZED

I Kings 19: 19. "He departed thence, and found Elisha, the son of Shaphat, who was ploughing with twelve yoke of oxen, and Elijah cast his mantle upon him."

ELISHA, the servant and successor of Elijah, was the son of a prosperous farmer in Israel. Shaphat, his father, was a man of substance; but, in accordance with the custom of his people, he had reared his son to a life of hard labor.

In the setting of our text we find Elisha a sort of superior officer over his father's ploughmen; but a ploughman himself. One spring day in the early afternoon when Shaphat's ploughs were at work in the verdant meadows, and Elisha's plough was the foremost of them all, Elijah, the white-haired prophet, came up behind Elisha, and cast his coarse spun mantle over the younger man's shoulders. No word was spoken; but the symbolism of the act conveyed it's meaning to Shaphat's son, and he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision.

Shaphat was growing old, and Elisha would soon have inherited the rich farm lands of Abel-Meholah; but in a moment, in spontaneous renunciation, Elisha determined to be a spiritual ploughman in the Lord's vineyard for the remainder of his life. To fortify his resolution he made a fire of the wood of his familiar plough; slew his oxen; and "burned his bridges" behind him. Then he arose, and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him.

Such were the circumstances of the calling of Elisha. Some years afterwards, at the death of his master, he accepted his appointment as the divinely appointed successor of Elijah. "And when the sons of the prophets that were at Jericho saw him, they said, 'the spirit of Elijah doth rest upon Elisha.' And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him."

There are many lessons suggested in the ancient record. Let us enumerate a few.

(1) *There is a note of optimism with regard to the future:* The world, and the Church, live and thrive from generation to generation under the guiding and upholding hand of God. We are apt to magnify the past at the expense of the future; to drop quietly all shadows from the picture as time goes on; and to gild the yesterdays with all sorts of false romance. We speak of the good old days; of the age of faith; and speak of "now-a-days" with a shake of the head, and a long-drawn sigh.

The world in general, and the Church in particular, are going "to the dogs". This is the attitude of the adult who contrasts the righteous behavior of the days of his childhood with the extraordinary license current in the behavior of the succeeding generation. This is the attitude of the man of slight historical perspective who labors under the mistaken impression that at one time humanity achieved approximate perfection, and that it has systematically deteriorated ever since. This is the attitude of the so-called Orthodox believer who shudders at the impious liberalism of modern thought, and who forgets that the spirit is leading the Church into all truth. In every department of thought there is to be discovered this unhealthy pessimism of outlook—comparing disadvantageously the present with the past, and prognosticating a reign of dire calamity in the untraversed future. Elijah, the Sinai of a man, with a heart like a thunderstorm, was at one time in his life guilty of this spirit of depreciation. He sat one day under a Juniper tree, and felt that the times were out of joint. God had apparently forsaken His inheritance, and was forgetful of His people's welfare. The future loomed menacingly before him, and he saw the faith of Jehovah corrupted to the vanishing point. His work seemed to have come to nothing, and, so far as he could perceive, there was no qualified man to take up his task when he

should lay it down. "It is enough," he cried, "now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am no better than my fathers." The fact was, however, that whilst Elijah was repining under the juniper tree God was preparing the young ploughman of Abel-Meholah to wear Elijah's mantle, and to carry on Elijah's work.

Let us recall this fact when we are forecasting the collapse of the Church; when we are bemoaning the fall of this, or that, "great man in Israel"; when we are tempted to contrast unfavorably to-day with both yesterday, and to-morrow. God is not asleep; He has not forsaken His world; He is rearing His great men for the great hour; and we shall eventually be assured of the fact that "The Lord is King; be the people never so impatient". There are to-day, at school, at college, in the shop, and in the office, young men and young women who in due course of time shall be as influential preachers, and writers, and statesmen, and social leaders, as any that the world has ever known—and far better adapted to the times and seasons than any of their mighty predecessors. Elisha was not Elijah; but he was the gift of the Living God to the Living Israel of his day and generation. God will look after the Church and the world far better than the most anxious-minded, and censorious, of His people. This is the greatest age that has ever burst over the hills of time, and to-morrow will be greater.

All that we have to do is to possess ourselves of faith in God; of faith in humanity; of salutary faith in ourselves; and to go about our business.

(2) *In this story there is a note of generous admiration:* The fifty sons of the prophets behaved towards Elisha in a manner which it were well for us to emulate to-day. They bow down before a better man than themselves. Elisha is younger than they; he is a farm boy, and with little, if any, theological training; and yet these qualified men of God pay him homage.

Surely there was blessing in store for Israel when she was possessed of such candidates for the sacred ministry. Without a murmur the sons of the prophets accept Elisha as the true successor of the famous Elijah, and accredit him their superior officer. This ready appreciation was suggestive of the deference paid Elisha by his fellow-preachers throughout his life. The old men, who had not achieved conspicuous success themselves, did not cast up Elisha's youth when Elisha's success began. They did not abuse him behind his back for his humble origin, and his lack of letters.

There must have been good theological seminaries in those days! The sons of the prophets were ready to believe in a God-endowed man despite his obvious limitations! There are divinity students at the present time who refuse homage to an archbishop. They are fully persuaded of the fact

that when they begin their active ministry they will eclipse all other stars in the firmament of contemporary ecclesiasticism! May God have mercy upon their inexperience, and smooth for their journey the tortuous path of a saner appraisement!

These prophetical graces are stimulating for us to read about at a distance; but they are far more beautiful, and satisfying, to God when they are exemplified in the everliving present. There is no denying the fact that there is altogether too much envy, and malice, in the professional world, and elsewhere. We dislike to see other men eclipsing us in any particular, especially in our selected vocation; and there are few things that we will not do to detract from the growing reputation of another fellow-mortal. We must self-consciously cultivate the spirit of magnanimity, and in our personal and corporate relationships achieve some measure of the generosity, and good manners, of the sons of the prophets.

(3) *In this story there is a note of originality:* Elisha's first instinct was to blot himself out in Elijah's coat of camel's hair, and his leathern girdle. He began his public ministry wearing those ancient and austere accoutrements. Elisha, however, was far too sincere a man to continue for long time wound up in such cerements. He set out in Elijah's mantle, and he performed his first prophet-

ical work clothed in such a garb; but he wore it awkwardly—the clothes did not fit—and he soon cast it aside. Elisha was a smaller and a more homely man than Elijah, and self-respect soon suggested that he adorn himself in less conspicuous garb.

The moral shines clear. We must not demand of our young preachers that they stride with the same step, and pronounce the same theological shibboleths, as the Elijah of our youth. We possessed Elijah for a season, and he fufilled his mission; but that is no reason why we should possess Elijah indefinitely, and determine his duplication in all his successors. Men who preach the word of God need above all other men to be men of to-day, and not of yesterday. The chances are that you have magnified the excellencies of Elijah as the years have added up their sum of time, and that the Elijah of your recollection would appear a different and a less fascinating person were he to reappear before you clad in the well-remembered mantle.

This suggests, does it not, the theme of originality. If there is any result which our civilization is achieving—a result apparent to all—it is the depersonalizing, and the standardization of men. More and more as the days go on we are being moulded upon the self-same pattern. Our supposedly rough edges are being smoothed off in the

factory of custom, and we are being placed upon the humanitarian market a finished bromidic product. It is a fortunate thing that we are ticketed; for, save for the label of a distinctive name, we might easily be mistaken for one another, and give rise to unpleasant complications. We speak alike; we think alike; we act alike; and, saddest of all to relate, we are actually beginning to look alike. The chances are that before long we shall be wound up, and run by clockwork, and speak automatically!

Surely it were fitting to make a plea for originality. We must be ourselves; for our own sake; for the delectation of our fellow-men; for the inherent charm of living; and, above all, for God's sake. Each life is a gift from the Creator of life. It is supposed to have its advent; its nativity; its epiphany, or manifestation; its struggle; its resurrection; and its pentecostal influence. It is, therefore, a serious thing to tamper with, or, to endeavor to manipulate, originality. Elisha is Elisha; with the talents, the personality, and the capacities of Elisha. He is a worth while instrument in the hands of God as Elisha; but as an emulated Elijah he is shorn of his strength, and comes perilously near to being a hypocrite. Elisha was a gentle, kind, unprepossessing lowland minister; Elijah was a tempestuous, passionate, seething whirlwind of a man; the one was as unlike the other as the green meadows of Abel-Meholah were

unlike the savage solitudes of mountainous Gilead. Let us see to it, parents, and teachers, and all others who are placed in formative positions, that Elisha wears his own dress, suitable to his figure and his own particular genius.

Optimism—belief in the Lordship of God for good; generous admiration for the good qualities and real achievements of our fellow-men; and the sacro-sanctity of originality. Here is a triune attitude towards life worthy of our consideration, and practice.

THE MAN WHO MADE A NATION TO SIN

I Kings 22: 52. "Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin."

THIS dread warning and condemnation occurs some twenty-three times in the Book of the Kings. Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, seems to have been a sort of sunken rock in the sea of mediaeval Jewish history. Whenever a mighty man foundered, and disappeared beneath the waves of infamy, he had wrecked himself upon this dangerous shoal.

Let us consider the story of A GREAT OPPORTUNITY; A GREAT FAILURE; and A GREAT PUNISHMENT.

(1) *A great opportunity:* Jeroboam had risen from the ranks of the common people. There were self-made men in those ancient times as there are self-made men to-day. The twentieth century, impression to the contrary, has no premium upon brains and opportunity. Just who Nebat was, nobody knows. He lived, no doubt, a quiet, unassuming life, and died an unnoticed death. His

claim to fame rests upon the fact that his son was a notorious sinner; a fame which few fathers crave, but which many fathers have thrust upon them. Disgrace rescues forgotten ancestors from their graves, and turns the searchlight of publicity upon their buried activities.

The story is an old one. A young man of marked ability attracts the attention of a king. Solomon noticed the young Ephthratite, and appointed him superintendent of his works. It was a dangerous thing for a youth to be elevated above his fellows. It always is a dangerous thing. Older men are jealous; naturally so; and make it decidedly uncomfortable for the upstart. They speak of "pull"; of "influence"; of "luck". They wag their heads, and shrug their shoulders, in appropriate suggestiveness of understanding, and pronounce the ultimatum—"a flash in the pan". Jeroboam's superiors in age were highly indignant at his unmerited promotion. "Jeroboam," they said, "a very ordinary man; the son of Nebat; his uncle murdered the King's Hebrew. Solomon must be in his dotage."

The promotion was a dangerous thing for Jeroboam himself. It involved a strong temptation to pride. The tendency was lest he should over-reach himself. To be a king's favorite is calculated to make a man esteem himself beyond his deserts. Power, especially in the young and untried, either

makes a man humble, or haughty; overbearing, or modest. There are dunces who cannot decipher their own limitations. It is risky to send little boats far out to sea. There are men; clever; sharp; natty; precise; newspaper fed and magazine fattened; who lose their heads when their salary is increased! To step from a dungeon into a palace is a perilous proceeding, and many unpleasant egotists are manufactured in the transition.

The fact is, nevertheless, that with all the danger from within, and from without, Jeroboam had a great opportunity. Israel at this time, towards the latter years of the reign of Solomon, was seething with discontent. The levied taxes were heavy. The king required much money in order to maintain his many wives and concubines and the luxuriousness of his court. Forced labor was the order of the day. There was much tribal jealousy. Clans, and households, were pitted against one another.

A clever youth like Jeroboam was just the man to seize the golden opportunity; to make capital out of prevalent misfortune. All that he has to do is to perform his duty in his present position, and to await the fulfilment of circumstances. Jeroboam, however, is impatient. Most young men are impatient. The youth oftentimes attempts to force the hand of destiny. This bright superintendent of works cannot await God's good time. So soon as occasion offers he lifts up his hand

against Solomon. The King puts down the revolt, and Jeroboam flies into Egypt. He lives there for some time, and Pharoah strengthens the ambitious pretender. This was the beginning of Egypt's interference in the affairs of Israel. Then Solomon dies, and we have the interview of Rehoboam with the leaders of the people. Rehoboam answers roughly; he takes the advice of his schoolfellows, as many young men have done from that day to this; and he says that his little finger shall be thicker than his father's arm.

Here again was Jeroboam's opportunity. God declared, "if thou wilt hearken to all that I shall command it will be well with thee". If only he had been faithful to his privilege a long life, and a useful, might have fallen to his lot.

(2) *The Great Failure:* Jeroboam was a good builder. As architect, and contractor, he had beautified Jerusalem. But the record of his enterprise, and professional talent, is eclipsed by his sin.

He is afraid that if the people of the northern tribes who owe him allegiance go up to the Holy City they will be weaned away from his command. "If they continue to go up they will turn to their people, and kill me." He is not far wrong in his reasoning. Religious beliefs die hard. They are imbedded in our frame with physical and mental growth. They live long. They haunt us as long as we live, and they confront us in the world

beyond. Jeroboam knew this. He also realized that every to-morrow has two handles—anxiety and faith—and so he seized the handle of anxiety, and said, "I will make the people idolators. I will teach them how to break the Decalogue." He, therefore, makes two calves of gold. "Do not go up to Jerusalem," he says, "it is a long and a tiresome journey. Here is Jehovah for you at your own front door." He was a wise man. He appreciated the truth that nature abhors a vacuum. The heart refuses to be permanently emptied. If you take away a man's orthodoxy you must give him a systematized heresy. If you deprive him of one belief you must construct another belief. The Israelites had to have some object to worship—either Jehovah, or an idol. After this Jeroboam built a temple. "Behold this majestic pile," he said, "what need is there to travel footsore and fatigued to Jerusalem when you have such a magnificent building within eye shot"? Then he made priests of the common people; he was a plebian himself, and sympathetic towards his own class; and even went so far as to change the date of the holy feast of tabernacles. He was the professor of religion made easy.

Jeroboam's plan worked well—for a time. Expediency usually works well—for a time. Come down to the requirements of laziness, and you will lead the mass—for a time. The Israelites took

to the new arrangements. Jehovah was dethroned, and Jeroboam was enthroned in his place. Worldly success, however, has it's drawbacks. It is better, after all, to "play the game"—in the long run.

(3) *The Great Punishment:* Jeroboam's hand withered. Jeroboam's child was stricken. Jeroboam's dynasty perished in one generation. His "sin found him out", and beyond peradventure.

Even in this world—appearances sometimes to the contrary—the sinner is punished. He has to pay the price. If nobody else finds him out his sin finds him out. The wicked do not always flourish as the green bay tree. When they seem to do so we should find on close examination that the leaves of the bay tree are riddled with plague, and that the heart of the trunk of the tree is rotten. The house may be beautiful; a veritable millionaire's palace; but in the banqueting room there is a skeleton at the feast, and along the corridors there wanders an unchained ghost.

Jeroboam corrupted the entire nation, morally and spiritually. The higher our position the more far reaching our influence either for good or for bad. Jeroboam is known forever as "Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin". In the revelation of St. John when the tribes are mentioned Ephraim is omitted on account of this transgression.

Now, what are the lessons? I believe that

Jeroboam is placed in the Bible by divine inspiration in order that men in all ages may profit from the account of his opportunity; his failure; and his sin.

(1) *We have a warning against a political conception of religion:* Some statesmen speak of Christianity as though it were a necessary superstition to be maintained for the legal restraint of the passions of men. It is supposedly a good thing for men and women to be Christians in that Christianity makes them, or is calculated to make them, law-abiding citizens. The principle is that if you give the child something harmless to play with he will not damage the furniture. Make Christianity a general thing; dilute it of all bigotry; and it will minimize the difficulties of both the policeman and the magistrate.

One gets so desperately tired of hearing Christianity spoken of as one of many religions, as a beneficent system of ethics, and as something that compares favorably with Buddhism, and Confucianism, and a few other Isms. Just as though there were any other religion which could be named in the same breath with Christianity. Just as though any halfway revelations were in the same class with "the faith" once for all delivered. Just as though politics could decree the measure of Christianity's acceptance, or the quality of Christianity's worth. Just as though, in the last analysis, the

relative acceptability of the State had anything to do with the absolute sovereignty of "The Truth as it is in Christ Jesus"!

(2) *God disapproves of expediency:* We may never conscientiously do evil in order that good may come. Wrong is wrong, and right is right, whatever comes before, or goes after.

The story of Jeroboam is a tremendous call to principle as opposed to expediency. Compromise never pays—in religion. A thing is either settled properly, or improperly—in divine estimation. No church, no minister, no Christian, can afford to split hairs in spiritual affairs.

The fact remains, however, that we are fond of expediency in the life of organized Christianity to-day. Many churches are built without one-half of the needed funds in hand. The honesty of the future is imprisoned in the selfishness of the present. Let us put up a church—duplicating the number of parishes in a community *ad nauseam*—at once, and without providential forethought, or conscientious consideration. What does it matter that we are unable to pay for it just now. There are a hundred communicants in this immediate locality who dislike travelling a mile to the House of God. We must think of the soul-stirring services which shall be held in the unpaid for sacred edifice, and of the ameliorative effect of the sight of such an establishment in the community. It is

expediency writ large; it is refined Jesuitism written with a flourish. A mortgage is often good business; but there are times when, in connection with a church, it is poor morality. The question to be decided is ever "is it right", not "is it wise".

(3) *The contagion of sin:* You start an error and you cannot tell to what an extent it will develop. "Woe to that man by whom the offence cometh." An author writes a shady book, a book which is, to say the least, "off color". It is, and naturally so, a huge success financially; but pure and innocent boys and girls lay hold of the filthy pages, and suffer defilement. "Woe to the man who makes Israel to sin". There is a son of Nebat, a modern Jeroboam, who is conspicuously doing this sort of thing to-day. He is epigrammatic; subtle; insinuatingly clever; speciously wise; and possessed in marked degree of all the sinuous wiles of the modern sophist. He is, in the heady minds of heady people, the originator of a cult, and the emancipator of self-confessed intellectualists from the bonds of an outridden moral code. His books, and the sayings contained therein, are quoted with delight by hair-brained men and women who ape bohemianism. "Woe to the man who makes Israel to sin"; for sin is contagious—it spreads like a malignant disease.

Let us turn from Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, and focus our attention

upon the precepts, and strive to copy the example, of Jesus, the son of God, who hath died that we might live—live unto righteousness, and our neighbor's happiness, both in time and in eternity.

A SCORNED MAN

II Chronicles 28: 22. "That King Ahaz."

THUS is the man branded forever in Holy Writ. "That King Ahaz." He left behind him a bad memory; the reputation of being the worst of all the Kings of David's Line. He was an apostate from the Faith of Israel, and in his reign of sixteen years he almost succeeded in stamping out the Worship of Jehovah.

His ignominy was his own; he had only himself to blame. The best of the Prophets had given him sound advice. Hosea on the North, and Micah on the South, had voiced the note of warning. But, as many a young man before and since, he took the bit into his own teeth, and traveled his own sweet road to hell.

Let us glance briefly at the history of his life: At the outset of his career Ahaz was possessed of a fatal broad-mindedness. He was ready to worship any god save the True God. He was the type of man who says, and is devoid of the remotest idea

of what he implies, "It does not matter what a man believes; we are all bound for the same place." He was bound for the Bad Place, and we have every reason to believe that he reached his destination!

He permitted his own son to pass through the fire to Moloch. He was not concerned about the comfort or discomfort of his child so long as there was the probability of a benefit accruing to himself. He multiplied his divinities, until it required a mathematician to keep pace with his pantheon.

Then war broke out. Sooner or later there is always war in the immoral man's camp. The heart of Ahaz was moved with fear. The immoral man is ever a coward at heart. The Syrians smote him, and carried away a large portion of his army into captivity. Ahaz invoked foreign help. He importuned the rulers of Assyria. He sent a present, a gift taken out of the House of the Lord, to placate their opposition. But the Assyrians accepted the gift, and turned a deaf ear to his supplicative entreaties. Then he sacrificed unto the Gods of Damascus; but they proved to be the ruin of him, and of all Israel.

In sore straits he cast his eyes on all sides, but he forgot to look up. There is a story of a boy who went with his father to rob an orchard. The father looked around and about him, to right and to left, to see as to whether or no he was observed. When he was satisfied that there was no one within

eyesight, he started to rob the orchard. Suddenly his son shouted, "Father; you have forgotten to look up!" Ahaz was the man of inferior expedients. He took everyone into account save God. He failed to lift up his eyes unto the Hills from whence would have come his all-sufficing help. The result was that he had a hard time, a desperately hard time. His enemies increased daily, until at last twenty-two tributary monarchs were allied against him.

As a solace in his misery he accentuated his idolatries. He saw another style and pattern of altar which caught his artistic taste, and he sent for the sample, and had it copied that he might worship another god. Soothsayers came from the East, expert salesmen, and altars were planted in every available corner of Jerusalem, until the Temple was laid bare, and bereft of worshippers. The sacred vessels were placed in the melting-pot; the Great Lava was taken down from its brazen base, and placed on stones; and only the Holy Light, the Shekinah, was left undisturbed.

After this—as a fitting climax—Ahaz died. He was not buried, however, in the Sepulchres of the Kings; for the Westminster Abbey of the Jews was too sacred a place to be polluted by the ashes of such a villain; he was interred outside the city limits.

That King Ahaz! What unutterable scorn is

expressed by the Biographer. *That* King Ahaz. The whole record of his life is the record of a Godless man who, in his desperation, clutched at any straw to save himself.

Let us take the story out of its setting in the Bible, and apply it to modern times, and to ourselves.

Have none of us bowed the knee to the devil that we might achieve earthly things? Old world cults had their worshippers, and we have fantastic cults, God knows, in Christendom to-day, and in the United States of America.

Many people are abandoning the old simple faith of their fathers for faiths which are, to say the least, less profoundly true. This is the Era of Adulterated Christianity.

Wherein lies the proselytising power of these new heresies; or these Old Heresies dished up with an unfamiliar sauce? The answer is partly this: The Old Faith has been a second-hand affair. It was the faith of parental instruction, and as such was nominally accepted, as a matter of course. The title deeds were never looked into, nor investigated. The believer believed without knowing anything about what he did believe. Then, there comes along the new evangel. It is in the air. People are talking about it, and as the promoters of a patent medicine for the soul, or for the soul through the body, they make stupendous claims on

its behalf. They insinuate that the Old Faith is out of date, and they suggest, with the charming smile of seraphic superiority, that to be abreast of the times in affairs religious you must tear a hole through the Apostles' Creed, and re-edit the Gospel According to the Past. Mortal man listens; is somewhat skeptical at first, but having an undue regard for his reputation as a reasonable being, and desiring to *get* as much out of his religion as possible, and failing to realize that *giving* is of the essence of worship, he falls an easy prey to words of ten syllables, and to a science which denies the fundamental principles of all science. The Gods of Damascus, and the Gods of Assyria, usurp the preëminence of Jehovah, the True God of Israel! What is the result? Why, applause from the self-constituted emancipators of thought, and commendation from the Sect of the Laodicaeans who feel that the new disciple is in a fair way to embark with them upon the lukewarm waters of individualism.

Oh, it is a merrie, a merrie game! Hard pressed by the hosts of doubt; fast impelled by indigestion, or hysteria in its multitudinous forms, or neurasthenic imaginations; the wisdom-wooed novice places a premium upon arrant selfishness, and importunes the Living God for a recipe for physical disabilities! These may seem strong words; but the circumstances of the case demand

strong words. If I have spoken fire, it is because there is fuel enough for a mighty conflagration. Before theology be discredited, and Iologies be substituted in its place, we have a right, minister and people alike, to indulge occasionally in passionate vocabulary!

There is enough in the Old Gospel to keep men and women busy all the days of their lives. There is enough to transform them into veritable Sons of God, and Servants of Jesus Christ. *That* King Ahaz might have been an Israelite indeed in whom there was no guile had he but studied the historic faith of his own country, and not gone aflirting with the Faiths of Damascus, and Assyria. All that he sought from afar was close at home, in his very midst, had he but possessed the mind of a scholar, and been trained, rabbinically trained, to differentiate between froth and substance.

Secondly: *Do we not have to pay a heavy price for all our minor helps?* Ahaz stripped the Temple, and sacrificed his son. Do we not have to pay as much to-day? We must give legal tender for all that we receive in this world. "Nothing for nothing" is the rule of business, and of life. We talk of a man's success; of a fortune accumulated; of a post, a coveted post, won. Yes; but at what a cost! Faces are turned to the successful which say, "Here died sympathy for your fellow-strugglers"; "Here died generosity"; "Here died mag-

nanimity." Voices, accusatory voices cry, "You are a shrivelled soul; shrivelled in the ladder's climb; shrivelled in the fourth rung"; "You are an embodied conceit; a personified greed; a corpse of your at one time unselfish self." "Nothing succeeds like success?" Quite so; but nothing costs so much as success; Ambition is a spendthrift which reiterates, "pay, pay, pay." Health; susceptibility; sensitiveness; pleasure, or the capacity for enjoyment; friendship; God; are all in the toll.

What if we gain the whole world, and lose our own souls? Surely, even as Ahaz, we pay too big a price. Who is the wise man; who the understanding Man? Is it not he who realizes that life is something more than getting; to expend oneself upon that which perishes? Is it not he who realizes that life is neither more nor less than the perpetuated opportunity of giving; to expend one's possessions, both inward and outward, upon the needs of others? *That* King Ahaz! The man of inferior expedients; the man of minor helps; is forever and always a failure; whatever the size of his bank account, or the accumulation of his real estate; and he goes down into history, local or universal, as *that* King Ahaz.

Thirdly: *We see in this story the falseness of earth's help:* Ahaz tried to propitiate the King of Assyria; but the King of Assyria did not respond.

When the imperative moment arrived he looked the other way, and let his Brother of Israel manage his own affairs as best he might. Then he bethought him of his pocket, and growled for more money. "A thousand extra shekels, Ahaz, and I might be induced to help you out of your difficulties." The King of Assyria was an avaricious gentleman. All of our lower alternatives forever *are* avaricious. When we deliberately place ourselves in their power they "squeeze us"; aye, they "squeeze us dry." If money is the only cement which binds us to our allies then repointing must be done constantly, or the fabric of the alliance will soon crumble into disrepair. Our sinful friends are here to-day, and away to-morrow. In the sunshine they disport themselves most lovingly in our presence; but when the day of darkness comes they are nowhere to be found. Lay hold of one of them by the heels as he turns to run away, and he will place the full blame and responsibility for the unsuccessful transaction upon your devoted shoulders; confessing himself to be as white as, nay whiter than, the new born snow. The only lasting help, the help which endures in prosperity and in failure, the help which is superior to all the vagaries of circumstances, and the fluctuations of condition, is the Help of God.

Finally: *The story of Ahaz is a striking illustration of the fact that sin forces us down.* We

begin by little, and we go on toward much. Just a slip. We right ourselves. Then a stumble. After that a fall. Then the lying down; the inability to rise upon our feet; and the wallowing in the mire. The drunkard of to-day would not have recognized himself ten years ago. The portrait of what he now is would have been an exaggerated picture painted by an unmerciful Hymnologist! The cynic began by clever phrases which produced laughter among stupid people. Then his growing reputation for saying smart things demanded an epigram on occasion—his mental ingenuity became a vice—and now he is a disbeliever in human nature, and a doubter of his God. Sin brings us down; its weight is a leaden weight. Sin makes white black, and black white; vice virtue and virtue vice. We are intended to achieve the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; but sin persisted in lowers us gradually, but most realistically, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of the devil. In Ahaz we have a running commentary upon the statement that "the wages of sin is death."

"Come now—let us reason together. Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as wool; though they are as crimson they shall be as white as snow." "To fall," said St. Chrysostom, "is not so dreadful as to lie where we fall; or to be wounded so bad as to refuse to be healed." To the modern

Ahaz, to the up to date Mammon truster, we may say in the Name of Jesus Christ, "To him that overcometh will I give a white stone, and in the stone a new name written." *That* King Ahaz may be changed into "The Disciple whom Jesus loved."

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

St. Luke 10: 30-38

THIS portion of Scripture is generally known as the Parable of the Good Samaritan. I would suggest another name—in my humble opinion more illuminative—and call it The Parable of the Open Road.

Let Me Present the Picture: The great sun-baked and dust-swept highway stretching between Jerusalem and Jericho; the road tramped by Pilgrims on their way to the Holy City; the road of commerce, along which merchants journeyed to the circumference of Palestine, and back again. On this highway, singled out for our attention, a bruised and bleeding traveler. Passing before him in rapid succession a Priest, a Levite, and a Samaritan. On either side of the highway, and far as the eye may see, the orientialism of the East in architecture; the verdure and the foliage of a fruitful climate; and lesser roads and narrow lanes intersecting to the utmost horizon. The highway I

take to be, as Christ implied, the highway of human life. The figures upon the highway, about whom I shall have more to say presently, the customary people to be met with in this world of time and place. The motives and impulses, the vices and virtues, are the medley of conditions the clash of which make up the sum total of existence.

Now, (1) *We Are to Live Our Life Upon the Highway:* It is there that disaster occurs; it is there that opportunity is met with, and grasped or repudiated. This incident did not happen upon a by-path. If it had the whole force and application of the Parable would be lost. We might then stand upon the Highway, shade our eyes from the noonday sun, peer over into the lane along the side, and say, "Poor man; he seems to be in a bad way; but it is his own fault. He should have stuck to the beaten tracks; he had no business wandering into unfrequented places."

Whatever the world may be like; a mosaic of sorrow and joy, of sin and righteousness, of selfishness and self-sacrifice, we must live in the heart of things if we would achieve our destiny, and serve God and man. The highway is neither more nor less than our vocation.

Now, I would have you notice *The Four Representative Figures Upon the Highway*; figures not

indigenous to the Parable, or Palestine, but to be discovered upon the Highway of Life to-day, and in the city of Cleveland.

The first figure upon the highway is *Innocence.*

The second figure upon the highway is *Cruelty.*

The third figure upon the highway is *Selfishness*; and

The fourth figure upon the highway is *Love.*

(1) *Innocence* "A man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho." We are not told anything about the motives, or the character of this traveler. Apparently he was a harmless pilgrim, doing no one any harm.

It is *Innocence* upon the highway of human life. Innocence set upon, robbed, stripped of its garments; Innocence procured for immoral purposes; and all through no fault of its own!

This is the appalling mystery of life; of the transactions upon the Open Road. How many men and women we have known, pure in intention, possessed of integrity of character, who have been frustrated in their endeavors, ruined in their achievement of success, through exterior circumstances for which they were not responsible, and over which they had no control.

The Insoluble Mystery of Irresponsible Pain! It has turned more people from faith to faithless-

ness than anything else in the world. What does it mean? We do not know. The more we question the mystery the more mystified we become. I feel, however, that there is a solution of the problem in this parable. God is giving us the test not of orthodoxy, but of love. The Priest and the Levite passed by—the Samaritan stopped and assisted. Innocence wronged is an opportunity for man's salvation. He may help; he may give the cup of cold water to the thirsty; he may clothe the naked; he may visit the sick; he may adopt militant tactics on behalf of morality.

Oh, the satisfaction of really being of use; of being able to assert ourselves for the welfare of our fellows; of having locality to work upon and transform with the light that never was on land or sea. The wounded traveler is the medium of the happiness which comes of laying down our life for the reconstruction of our fellow men.

(2) *Cruelty:* This is a gruesome figure—"he fell among thieves". It is a realistic figure in our midst to-day. The criminal, even as the poor, we have ever with us. We read the daily papers, and upon every page vice raises its hideous face.

The Criminal! Why, we do not think much about him. Do we? We know that there are prisons, and penitentiaries, and reformatories, with their more or less vicious inmates, and we leave the matter there. You say, "this is a matter for

the State to deal with, for the judge, the magistrate, and the policeman; it is outside the province of the Church." It may be so; but when I read this parable I find that the responsible parties were the thieves. They mutilated the innocent traveler.

Why, then, does not Jesus accentuate the deliberate guilt of the thieves? For this reason—in His opinion the people who do actual wrong are not so bad as the people who do nothing at all. The priest and the Levite who passed by were more devilish than the robbers who waylaid!

That is a strong statement? Yes; but it has the backing of Scripture, and it is enforced by the tenor of the life of Jesus Christ.

In the Old Testament, you remember, that on one occasion Israel was hard beset by Sisera, and his mighty host. The very continuance of the Theocracy was in jeopardy. Every Israelite was summoned to repel the invader. The towns and the cities and the rural districts responded; all save one little hamlet, named Meroz. "Meroz held back. She was off the highway, asleep in her mountain fastnesses. Meroz heeded not the trumpet blast, but fed her bleating sheep upon the verdant hills. What was the verdict of the inspired prophetess, Deborah? 'Curse ye, Meroz, saith the Angel of the Lord; curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; for they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.'"

Or, turn to Christ's teaching. There is the parable of Dives and Lazarus. Dives was doomed to punishment. "In hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment." Why? Not because, as Doré in his famous picture would suggest, he had done active injury to Lazarus, but because every day as he passed by the lodge gate in his chariot he turned away his head in loathing at sight of the beggar's sores. He did nothing—therefore he was damned!

Or, take the man with one talent. Why was he censured? Not because he used his money in destructive channels; but because he did not utilize it at all. In the twentieth century that man would be a promoter of bogus companies; getting the dollars of others, and not risking a cent himself!

My friends, this is a sad as well as a glad world; there is much to be done for Christ and man; and if we do nothing, if we sit complacently with folded hands and let the world go by; then, in God's sight we are more culpable than the originators of sin.

Here lay this poor man. He was in pain; real pain, for he was a Jewish worshipper, not a Christian Scientist; he needed succor. The Priest and the Levite were more cruel than the robber band.

(3) *Selfishness:* This is a familiar figure; we have seen him, we have seen her, so often; alas, the features are to be found in our own physiognomy. We have been throwing stones at the Priest

and the Levite, but perhaps we are somewhat Priestly, in the wrong sense, and Levitical ourselves!

The Priest, no doubt, was going down to Jericho to hold service; the Levite, in all likelihood, to attend the synagogue worship. As they trudge along the highway they see in the distance a confused object lying prone upon the road. They approach nearer, and it assumes the shape of a man, and a man bedraggled and covered with blood. The Priest stops; looks the man over; feels inclined to do something for the unfortunate victim, but then remembers the time. "I should like to help this man," he says, "but service is at eleven o'clock, and it would never do to keep the congregation waiting." So, on the stroke of the hour, clad in immaculate surplice, and appropriate stole, he takes his accustomed place in the chancel, and chants, in silvered intonation, the Daily Exhortation!

And the Levite? Why, some people are so literal in their interpretation of the highway that in London, England, they stick to Regent Street, and never go through Whitechapel, and in New York they parade Fifth Avenue, and never trouble the East Side with their presence. But, when on Regent Street, or Fifth Avenue, they see a revolting sight, emblematic of poverty or misery, they put their embroidered handkerchiefs up to their

eyes, if they are women, drawing in convulsively their skirts, and pass by on the other side. "Ugh!" they say, "did you see that? Horrible, was it not? I suppose such things exist; but it does not do to think about them; does it? Let us go home and forget all about it." Oh, the great Sect of the Nothingists! The largest denomination on the face of the earth. Their constitution, purely negative, is never a subject of controversy from within. They are infallible! How the Blessed Master, who went about doing good, despises them; for they are the contradiction of His every word and deed.

My friends, let us be up and doing for Christ and man. Let us be Christians, not Nothingists. Let us for the future live our old life in the old surroundings in a new way. Duties literally spring out of the ground beneath our feet; we shall stumble over them unless we have a care. Let us look for the wounded traveler to-morrow and all the days, and play the part of the Good Samaritan.

(4) *Love:* Thank God that we have this figure to close with. The Good Samaritan was, probably, an ordinary looking man. He would have been in appearance most disappointing from a lady novelist's point of view. He was not arrayed in embroidered phylacteries; his advent was not heralded by a trumpet articulated by his own breath. He was the kind of man who would not stand out in a crowd;

but he himself, and his purse, were at the service of the traveler. How often we meet this Figure of Love. More often to-day than ever before. Unassuming men and women going about even as the Master went about doing good. On the great Highway, the Open Road of Human Life, amid the anthems of the glad, the groans of the pain-racked, the reptile devilishness of the Tempter, above the surging conflict of tumultuous opinion, Love, Bejeweled Love, greater than faith, more majestic than hope, soothing, comforting, and inspiring in the streets and haunts of men. Jesus incarnated in the person of His Disciples.

How does Christ close the Parable? With an exhortation—brief, terse, and emphatic—*Go thou, and do likewise.*

THE CITIES OF REFUGE

Joshua 20: 2. "Speak to the Children of Israel, saying, Appoint you Cities of Refuge."

THE ancient Jews were the happy possessors of Cities of Refuge. The murderer who had slain his fellow man unawares, that is, unwittingly, and who in our superior civilization would at least be found guilty of manslaughter, and punished accordingly, could flee to any one of these several cities, six in all, and be free from the assaults of justice, and the anger of the avenging kin. It was a piece of Divine Legislation in keeping with the wisdom of the theocratic government of the Chosen People. A wholesome and merciful allowance was made for the unpremeditated weakness of men.

He is a wise man who has a knowledge of his own powers, but he is a wiser man who is imbued with an accurate consciousness of his own limitations; for the one person against whom we have all of us to be on our everlasting guard is *self*. In keeping, then, with the Israelites of olden time,

who made definite provision for their shortcomings, I have my own cities of Refuge, my own Kedesh, and Shechem, and Hebron, and Bezer, and Ramoth, and Golan, whither I flee to escape my implacable enemy—*myself*.

For myself is an enemy to me; indeed it is; and in this respect I speak for all. This eminently respectable myself—that I dress in as good clothes as I can afford to buy, and in the uniform of the King of Kings at that, that I feed three times a day, and lay down to sleep eight hours out of twenty-four, that I exercise systematically, to keep the flush of health upon its outer casing, that I would have all people think to be high-minded, self-controlled, and possessed of the noblest ideals; that, in fact, I have dared to set up in pulpits, and on platforms, and made preach and speak to apparently honest folk, telling the same honest folk what they ought to think, to say, and to perform, is an enemy to me; is in truth, a fellow I should hate to have any one know too well.

My perpetuated warfare has ever been with this same myself—this myself where hot fevers dwell, where fierce passions run riot, where the Devil, entrenched behind the barricade of flesh, flings his choking gases, and by strategy unrecognized in the conventions of The Hague undermines the citadel of my cherished self-respect. The surroundings of my life may from time to time be

inimical to my true development, the maladversions of my fellow men may contribute to the frustration of my apprehension of the Ego as ordained of God, but my inveterate and seemingly invulnerable Arch Antagonist, the danger of my soul, and the peril of my happiness, is this unsleeping, ever-vigilant, persistently jeering, no-quarter-giving opponent, *myself*.

I have, therefore, founded and equipped Cities of Refuge where I may flee from the Jewry of myself; Kedeshs, and Shechems, and Hebrons, and Bezers, and Ramoths, and Golans of the soul, where I may fling aside the accoutrements of conflict and inaugurate that peace which is alone well worth the consummation, the armistice of myself with me.

My six cities of Refuge are as follows, and I hand them on with qualifications of temperament and experience to those of you who are intent upon the subjugation of the forces within personality, rather than without.

The first, and I think the foremost, City of Refuge is WORK. I work now because I like it, I have come in this respect to live by the Law of Liberty, but formerly it was not so. In the old days I had far rather spend money than earn it, and I could loaf as thoroughly and wholeheartedly as the other man; I was not afraid to give up work and be a parasite, for some one will always look out for the lazy as well as the sick. But now I work

because I respect myself at work, and am at rest with the finite without me, and the infinite within me. I find that when I am at work I am Dr. Jekyll; and in idleness I would be fearful of degenerating into Mr. Hyde. Work is the salvation of my soul, not in an evangelical sense, but at any rate in common sense; for it saves me from myself, the horror that comes home to men's business and bosoms. I have come to the conclusion by my own experience and observation that crime is largely the product of leisure, of unrestrained leisure, and that most of the moral lesions that affect individuals could be cured by sawing wood. Oh! the joy, when the problems of life get too agonizing in their masked periodicity for the consecutive straining of the limited human mind; when friends disappoint us in their inconsistency, and suggest by their behavior the untrustworthiness of human nature; when health falters in its uphill fight, and presses the unbecoming self-consciousness of the body upon a refined mental perspective; when domestic affairs enervate our satisfaction by their harrowing obtrusiveness; when the reading of Biography with its completed picture of the individual life portrayed in a few hours' reading indicates the struggle of life as inconsequential placed against the background of its undeniable brevity; when, in fact, things go wrong, and the world seems impregnated with the impish and elfish desire to strangle

the happiness of life; what a joy to hie ourselves to the City of Work; to pass through the time-honored portals, and find our way along the streets which in the noise of their traffic deaden the sounds that have thronged discordantly upon our world-wearied ears, and to enter the hives of industry, where in occupation, absorbing occupation, we may find the solace of heartache, and the anasthesia of care.

The second City of Refuge, and it is geographically situated hard by the first, is the City of Order. It is a truism, but it is a truism frequently overlooked, that order is the prerequisite of successful work; that if we do not compel ourselves to system we get little accomplished, and that little unsatisfactorily. If I worked only when I felt like it you could contain the amount in a pint measure, and the quality in a window-pane. Inspiration is all right in its place, and that place a confined area, but occasional inspiration is the greatest humbug let loose in the haunts of men. The heart has its habits as well as the mind, and the world's best work, noblest poetry, highest art, and divinest prophecy have come through men who were pounding away so many hours a day; who appreciated the fact that genius is largely the capacity for taking infinite pains. Huxley was a genius in natural

science, and Huxley worked from seven o'clock in the morning to midnight every day of his life, with an occasional jaunt to Switzerland or Wales to resuscitate his tired body. Archbishop Benson of Canterbury was an ecclesiastical genius, and yet in his Biography written by his son, who had good cause to know the truth, he slept only five hours out of the twenty-four, and spent the other nineteen in the multifarious duties of his high calling. So with all the great men of Art, and Letters, and of Professional or Commercial renown, regularity of application has ever been the rule and not the exception. By system we not only accomplish so much more, but we achieve a peculiar poise, and a blissful contentment with self. An ordered day is like a swept and tidied room; an unordered day is like a cluttered desk, or a frowsy woman. The Shechem of Habit; ah! this is a City which if one has ever visited he will be loath to leave. The streets of the City are pure gold, and the pavements are of precious stones. The pilgrim to this mecca of peace will forget his nomadic tendencies, apply for citizenship, and be content to spend his life within its protective walls.

The third City of Refuge is Family. Any man would be ashamed to confess how many vile and blackguard thoughts and possibilities, have lunged at him only to be warded off by this heart shield; how, not sometimes, but often, the presence of the

wife and the wistful faces of the little children, have bestowed peace, and averted disaster, as if an army with banners had moved to the succour of a beleaguered town. A good bachelor must be either a strong and noble man, or an anaemic, bloodless paste. Most of us are neither; we are just ordinary men, we are simply human without any qualifications, and ordinary, human men need a wife and children as a locomotive needs an engineer, to prevent a wreck, as well as to make it go. This is the Inner City in a man's life, the Secret City such as exists in China, and such as was to be found in ancient urban civilizations dissipated in the centuries. Here is the City which stands sentinel in the center of the outlying circle of all the cities of Refuge—the Hebron of the Heart—and into which a man may shut himself unpursued by the hosts of the market place. There is sometimes a pain awaiting a man across his own threshold, but there is the anodyne of love to soothe the wounded feelings, and to foster hope in the travail of despair. There is sunshine there, and calm, and the odor of fragrant flowers, and an earth and sky crowded with a flooded glory. The gates of this City stand open by day and night, and the humblest man in the estimation of his fellow-men may pass inside the charmed area, and receive as a King within his kingdom the homage of his subjects. The only requisite is that the King shall be kingly, and

reign by the virtue of a selfless regard for the welfare of all. The City of Home! Blessed indeed is the man, blessed indeed is the woman, who has such a refuge from all the malevolences of life; who has the privilege of escape from the larger world to this smaller world, this world within the world; who by their sacrifice of short-sighted selfishness have the opportunity at any hour of leaving the outer court with its discordant necessities for the Holy Place, where law is submerged in the dictates of love, and the atmosphere is vibrant with the harmonies of Heaven. Such is Hebron in the Hill Country of Judah; fairer, and more secure than all the Cities of the Plain.

The fourth City of Refuge is Forgiveness. I am speaking of the escape from self, and self is never so tyrannical as when its amour propre is wounded by the aspersions, just or unjust, of other people. It is then that self learns to hate, and the only hope of contentment lies in flight to the city of forgiveness, Bezer, beyond the Jordan at Jericho eastward. For hate, my friends, does not pay. It is pure waste. It exhausts our vital forces, and gives us nothing in return. Why should I let my enemy rob me of sleep? I shall put aside all feeling about him, even if it takes as much moral effort as a drunkard needs to refuse his drink. I shall endeavor to emulate the immortal Lincoln, of whom Emerson says, "His heart was as large as the

world, yet it had no room in it for the memory of a wrong." I shall strive to practise the common sense axiom of Paul Morton who when asked if he did not like to get even with anyone who had done him an injury, replied, "No, I haven't time. I am too busy." To get rid of hate and its spendthrift results we must hie ourselves to the City of Forgiveness, the city set upon the Heights. To bear grudges, to harbor bitter animosities, to wish evil to any man, is to dwell in the miasmatic swamps of the lowlands, and to roam at large in the uncircumscribed spaces of Judaea subjected to all the requirements of the law for man. I know of nothing that so robs the soul of peace, and the life of that equanimity which is essential to correspondence with opportunity, as the dwelling upon the wrongs inflicted upon us, wittingly or unwittingly, by our fellow-men. It takes the angel out of us, it dries the fountain of charity within our heart, and turns the crystal water into poison. It deprives the mind even of the power of concentration, and is a certain prelude to paucity of thought and effort. The City of Forgiveness, easy of access, and nearer at hand than all the Cities of refuge, is within reach of the angered heart and the clouded brain, and welcomes its pilgrims with the outstretched arms of Jesus Christ Himself who said, "Love your enemies; do good to those who despitefully use you; forgive your Brethren their debts,

even as you would expect God to forgive you your trespasses."

The fifth City of Refuge is Humor. I say this in all seriousness, for I believe with all my heart in the religious value of humor. Self is prone to take itself too seriously, to esteem itself above its just deserts, and the only effective medicine for recovery, a bitter physic, but most necessary, is laughter. The higher moods of the soul have always a tendency to grow unhealthy. It is but a step from the ripe to the rotten, and spiritual ecstasy is apt to run into refined sensuousness. What an argument, or a text of scripture, could never reach has been transfixed by a smile. The Walls of many a spiritual Jericho folly have tumbled at the sound of laughter. For the distinguishing quality of humor is its inherent sanity. People deep in love do not laugh much, because they are quite insane. The egotist, besieged with an overweening sense of dignity, also laughs but little, because he is altogether crazy. The Religious Bigot is monstrously solemn for the same reason. When Self would insist that the Hemispheres are revolving around you as their orbit, and so infer that the community is inappreciative of the inestimable privilege of possessing you as a fellow citizen, look in the Mirror, my friend, and beholding the face of a simpering and self-inflated fool, laugh until the tears come into your eyes, that, cry-

ing with hilarity you may purge mediocrity of its esteemed infallibility! The City of Humor, Ramoth in Gilead, the home of the Gadarenes; the City of Fun; where would we be, most of us, with our long-drawn faces, and our grotesque self-importance, if we never entered its hospitable enclosures, and permitted ourselves temporary residence at least in its homes of health and merriment! How altogether insupportable would be the burden of living, and how implacable the fact of death! I entered its precincts when the load of myself and the weight of my fellows was as a leaden pack that crushed my enfeebled shoulders to the ground, and what did I find? Why, the humor of kindly hearts, the friendly wit that was bubbling over with a filled to the brim humanity, surgical smiles that lanced my too sickly sentiments, sunny laughter that rebuked my narrow thought, and disinfectant raillery that played fond havoc with my egotisms. The inhabitants were friends, each and every one of them, and their friendship was manifested in this—that they made my follies appear ridiculous.

The last City of Refuge, for though there are many more I confine myself to six that our allegory may be complete, is the Church. Here, if you will, is a resort far removed from the world of men, and in which the world of self is translated into the

fairest colors, and the most likeable proportions. A City set upon an hill, eternal in time and lasting in eternity; the Golan of Bashan on Earth, and the New Jerusalem in the Heavens. Whatever your sorrows, whatever your sins, whatever the struggles within, and the manifold wrestlings without, this is none other than the metropolis of the Soul, and the Capitol of the Heart of Man.

It cannot be denied, however, that traveling to this City of Refuge, that going to Church, is somewhat out of fashion. So much so, in fact, that it is fashionable in certain quarters to jest at the travellers who are accustomed to make the journey. A jesting, by the way, that bespeaks the possession of the most elementary sense of wit, and which redounds to the excruciating taste of the jester. By this present widespread unpopularity of the city of Golan we are missing much that is truly fine and well worth while; and we are permitting the gratuitous assumptions of impertinent people to rob us of a sterling privilege.

Why should we flee periodically to this City of Refuge? Here is one reason, and not the deepest nor the most spiritual. Because it is the oldest City upon the face of the Earth. Under one name or another it has always existed, and its antiquity antedates even the beginning of Free Masonry. It is a comfort and an inspiration to belong to an organization that has persisted throughout the smiles and the

frowns of the Ages. In the Church as she is to-day we claim membership with that Institution whose "Altar Fires Moses builded in the Wilderness, whose services were held in the Catacombs of Rome in the reign of Nero, whose lofty Cathedrals grace Milan and Cologne, and whose weekly gatherings still take place in every hamlet and city of the civilized world." I am drawn as with the cords of a magnet to this antiquity, to this connected triumph over time, and I feel with pride that I am a Citizen of no mean City. So for this reason, and for many others, I deplore the present smallness of the population of Golan, and advocate a wholesale Pilgrimage to her numerous shrines.

Kedesh, Shechem, Hebron, Bezer, Ramoth, Golan—and the Greatest of these is Golan; the City of God.

COURAGE

Joshua 10: 25. "Be strong, and of a good courage."

I WANT to speak to you about what has been called "the loftiest of all human qualities." A quality which is much in evidence in this era of unprecedented warfare—in the countries involved in bloodshed, as well as in our own, until recently, neutral land, where preparedness is the question of the hour. A quality which all educated and effective life demands, in the home, in the counting house, in the halls of learning, and in the houses of parliament. A quality which has many specious counterfeits, and concerning which our thought ought to be clarified.

That quality, then, and my subject, is *courage*.

The derivation of the word, as I have recently discovered through extensive reading, for it never occurred to me of my own volition, is "*cor*"—the heart of a man. For anyone to lose heart, as the saying is, is to lose courage—the power of passive or aggressive resistence. Courage is the foundation,

the groundwork, of a man—as a man's courage is, so is the man. I have also discovered that the Ancients, in their analytical wisdom, gave to courage the name of "*virtus*"—the substance of all the virtues.

Now this courage—this *Cor,* the heart of a man—this *virtus,* the substance of all the virtues, is never found in the fulness of its proportions in any man. We may be courageous in this or that part of our nature; but we are not courageous in all. I know a man in Canada who recently received the D. S. O., the Distinguished Service Order, for conspicuous bravery upon the field of battle. He has my admiration as a courageous man, courageous in the face of physical danger. But I know the man in his life of peaceful pursuit at home, and he is the most timidly conservative of men; afraid to express an opinion that everybody else does not express upon matters of current concern. He would never receive a D. S. O. so far as his intellectual processes are involved. He is a physical hero, and a mental coward.

I know a man—I would not have to travel far to find him—I rather imagine that I am that kind of man myself—who is fearless so far as the Truth is concerned, who does not confound orthodoxy with the *summum bonum* of thought, and who would not let any ecclesiastical tribunal do his thinking for him, and yet he shivers at the necessity

of punishing a recalcitrant dog, for fear that the dog may devour him! He is an intellectual hero; but apparently a physical coward.

So is it with all men. No man is synthetically courageous; courageous in every department of his nature. Somewhere, or other, he has his breaking strain. "Find out the region of a man's courage, and you have discovered the man."

Now, what are some of the kinds of courage of which human nature is capable?

(1) As already indicated, there is *physical courage:* Such courage is not to be despised. It is worthy of the Victoria Cross, of the Legion of Honor, of the Iron Cross, and of that Cross which is so prolific on the battle-fields of Europe to-day —the wooden cross upon a hastily constructed grave. All honor to the man who is calm, and collected, in the hour of vital crisis, and who is competent to stand in the presence of death without a tremor.

It is sometimes said that physical courage is instinctive; that it is an initial gift, inherent in the individual, and that it cannot be cultivated. No doubt, with qualifications, this is true; although one would be prone here to substitute insensibility to danger, for courage. There are those to whom it is as natural to cringe with fear, as it is for others to meet peril with unflinching mein. Physical courage, however, may be cultivated.

Again, I would say that I have spoken to many men who have spent the last two years, off and on, in the trenches of Flanders, and elsewhere. They have told me, almost without exception, that the first experience of being under fire is a harrowing experience, that a man had rather be anywhere in the world than exposed to the hail of shrapnel, and the fumes of choking gas. The first inclination is often an inclination to run, to run anywhere, to get away from the livid hell of flame, and the nerve torture of unremittent sound. But, as experience increases, and as a man's will and reason come to the rescue of his bodily weakness, courage, unfailing courage, becomes second nature, so persistent in its exercise as to be unconscious in its performance to the possessor.

We should, as individuals, and as a nation, cultivate the virtue of physical courage. The conditions of modern life are against the condition, and its achievement. The prevalence of unprecedented luxury is unfavorable to the existence, and the development of physical courage. The circumstances of our life; the comforts which surround us on every side, pampering the body to the verge of softness and beyond; are inimical to that stoicism of endurance so noticeable in the Fathers of our Republic. America, through her very late participation in this world war, is in danger of sinking into the slough of luxury—that luxury

which enervates the sinews and the resistance of a people, in the individual and the mass. The nations of Europe have, at least, escaped with their manhood, and the stream of self-indulgence which they have washed off with the horrors of conflict is flowing westward. War is a stern school, but it is a school where men learn noble things, and Belgium, France, England, Russia, and the rest have been crucified upon the cross of duty, and their resurrection is assured. We have to beware lest in America after this war is over children are fewer and fewer; men more and more profligate; and women more and more pleasure loving; until some great cataclysm of physical degeneracy enfolds us in a deluge of besotted self-indulgence. We must consciously educate ourselves in physical courage, learning to endure hardness as good soldiers in all departments of life, because all types of courage are related to, and closely dependent upon, the physical. Boldness of body begets boldness of mind and spirit. Physical courage is symptomatic and correlative, as well as absolute.

(2) *Moral courage:* Although associated with physical courage, moral courage stands upon a higher plane. The root idea of its expression is based upon principle. To be morally brave we must be moved by a superlative motive superior to all other considerations. To do what we consider to be the right thing to do, whatever other people

may say; to move onwards over all obstacles toward some conscientious result; that is moral courage. To tread popularity under foot for the sake of principle; that it is to be truly heroic. What picturesqueness moral courage would give to life, if universally applied. Life is dull in exact proportion to our moral cowardice. People speak alike; dress alike; act alike; and, God help those of us who are handsome, are actually beginning to look alike! Civilization tends toward uniformity; whereas progress is achieved, and interest and enthusiasm are maintained, through diversity. Only moral courage may slay unanimity; therefore, moral courage is what we need above all things.

A public holiday is past. We are still living in the aroma of its occurrence. Was it not, as all holidays are, soul benumbing, and stifling to our artistic sense? A prevalent monotony held us in its bloodletting grip. The creaking boots; the Sunday clothes of the poor. The smoking motors, and the immaculate clothes of the rich. The tired children at the close of day, and the still more tired parents. The sameness of occupation, or the lack of occupation, clogged upon us all. What a difference to-day. The factories, and shops, and homes, are thronged with men and women and children performing their specialized tasks. No two people are doing the same thing, or at any rate,

they are not doing it in the same way. The call of duty has produced variety. Moral courage in its operation has cleared the murky skies. Or, think of our homes as an illustration. They are furnished with the furniture with which our neighbors' homes, of the same social status, are furnished. It is all desperately dull, and boresome. But, if each family decked their houses with those things which predilection would suggest, irrespective of their neighbors' estimation of the appropriateness of the decoration, we should have a charming variety of taste's expression, calculated to alleviate monotony, and enlarge the will to live!

The ordinary man needs the moral courage to adventure the extraordinary thing. To live out the law of our own being, and to do the things that we are meant to do, and so achieve our self-realization upon the highest levels, would make the world worth while. We should have our Daniels then in Babylon, and our Pauls in Rome.

What a field there is in business for the practice of moral courage. A man told me not long ago that it is impossible for a man to be honest in business. He said that all is fair in war, love, and business; that if you would get ahead of the other man you must be Cassius-like in your shrewdness. The man was a liar, and, in his heart of hearts, I think that he knew that he was a liar, and that he was

indulging in the culpable man's exercise of special pleading. Any man with moral courage can be honest anywhere, in whatever situation be may happen to be placed—whether in the sale of tobacco, or in the sale of Gospel Goods. To face the possibility of poverty like a man, and to know that to be rich is a mixed blessing; to face the possibility of mediocrity like a man, and to know that to be prominent is not necessarily to be happy; such an attitude, induced and superinduced by moral courage, spells honesty in any vocation. As business men, as professional men, as sociological experts, as civic reformers, let us build our outlook and our endeavors upon the cornerstone of moral courage, then the building which we rear of all our life's opportunities will be well compacted together, and able to withstand the winds and the storms of antagonistic and adverse oppositions.

(3) *Intellectual Courage:* So far as our minds are concerned we are either imitative, or self-assertive. We either accept the opinions of other people as our own, or we assume the opposite of what our fellows believe to be true. We are either conservative or radical, and so are afraid of either the charge of radicalism or conservatism. It is thus that we are temperamentally disposed, but to rest there, to remain throughout our life as we were constituted at our birth, is to be in either case a coward. We are to seek truth for truth's sake,

irrespective as to whether or no we agree in conviction with the conservative or the iconoclast.

Take *Politics:* To what is the prevailing apathy, and, withal, the fantastic enthusiasm, of Americans in relation to things governmental, due? Not ignorance; we have a genius, an innate sagacity, for public affairs. Not a low standard of morality; we are, as a people, essentially moral. It is a floating with the tide; or a fighting of the current for mere fighting's sake.

Neither the Republican nor the Democrat has a monopoly of cowardice. To listen to what the crowd say, in order to affirm Amen, or No, is not brave. One is as weak as the other.

What is needed politically, as in many other directions that one might name, is that people should think for themselves, and form their opinions for themselves, whether their opinion is agreeable or hostile to what other people think and believe. Then we should have statesmen, not politicians, and truth would reign supreme, with fair face uplifted to the sky.

We have spoken then, in fragmentary fashion, about courage; physical, moral, and mental.

How may we be courageous in body, mind, and soul? (1) *We must possess the power of being possessed:* We must know what it is to be mastered by an idea. Seeing all objects we are to select one toward which, with might and main, we shall strive.

With Paul, we must be able in all truthfulness to assert, "this one thing I do." Our energy is to be concentrative, not diffusive.

(2) *We must be devoid of self-consciousness.* To be always thinking of one's self is death to every noble thought and act. Self-consciousness is the suicide of courage. Affectation is personal damnation. To be mastered by a principle one must be selfless. The coward is always the "pro and con egotist."

(3) *We must glorify and achieve simplicity:* I am not great, great as a man, or great as a preacher, unless I am clever enough to be simple. Complexity is a dissipation of energy. "Except ye become as a little child," in business, and in all else, ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of courageous hearts.

Directness, self-forgetfulness, and simplicity, well mixed together, and the ingredients of each proportionately mixed together, this is the recipe of courage—courage physical, mental, and moral.

All hail, then, to courage. This is the fundamental, the soul-quality, needed in the solution of America's problems, in the small and in the great. We must have courage, in the singular and in the plural, if, in the words of Phillips Brooks, we would place upon humanity's candlestick a new type of virile manhood to give light to the world.

I can see no transfigured future ahead of us,

in the reconstruction of society which trembles in the womb of to-morrow's peace; no vindication of the travail which has ushered us into nationhood; without the possession of courage, domestic, commercial, professional, political, literary, social, and religious. Let us then, as individuals, and as an organization, be "strong and of a good courage."

NOTE: In this sermon the author is obviously indebted to a well-known article in "The Published Addresses of Phillips Brooks."

"THE BOOKS WERE OPENED"

Revelation 20: 12.

THIS is a figure of speech, and, as such, stands for something. The Bible from beginning to end pictures divine truths under the garb of metaphor, or simile, to meet the level of our finite minds. The divine is expressed, and necessarily so, in terms of the human.

"The Books were opened." A material Book in an immaterial world! How absurd. The phrase, however, has its significance; a significance that could not be portrayed otherwise to mortal man. What does it mean? It refers, of course, to the Judgment. It is the evidence accumulated through this probationary life by which ultimately we shall be justified or condemned. It stands for determinative self-collected testimony.

Some years ago I walked through the Insane Asylum at Verdun in the Province of Quebec. There was an inmate there who told me that he had been dead ten times. Upon the last occasion,

immediately succeeding his demise, he was ushered into the presence of the Recording Angel. A Book was lying upon the bejewelled table. "Mr. Smith," said the Angel, "you have been responsible for much evil." The man protested his innocence; he asserted that he had been "a good living man", doing unto others as he would that others should do unto him. The Book was opened, and the Angel said, "read the record of your transgressions." The man read, and there was a detailed account of his sins *written in his own handwriting.* The poor lunatic, you see, reached the root of the matter. It was a case of self-collected testimony.

"The Books were opened." *What are these Books, filled in by ourselves?* (1) *There is the Book of Memory:* Memory is a wonderful, indefinable, and miracle-wrought function of personality, artificial and treacherous, dependent upon complex conditions. It is the servant of our wills, and yet their master. It fails us when we need it most, and it oftentimes tortures us when we would desire the past to be drowned in the sea of oblivion. There is a peculiar theory abroad at the present time about memory. It is said by psychologists of note that we are possessed of a dual consciousness. There is the conscious, or empirical self, the self of every-day activities, and there is the subconscious, or subjective self beneath the surface of immediate consciousness which carries on the me-

chanical operations of the body such as the beating of the heart, the circulation of the blood, and the expansion of the lungs. This subconscious self is the seat of memory. It contains and retains all our submerged knowledge; all the impressions of our personal past, and the recollections of bygone days. What we are aware of at any moment is a millionth part of what we really know. All that we are not thinking of is reserved in the subconscious self to come to the surface as opportunity dictates. The latest belief about this subconscious self is that it is the soul. There is much to fortify this idea, such as the superior morality of the subconscious self under hypnotic influence to the regular workings of the conscious self. The argument, then, shines clear. Memory is part of the subliminal, or subjective self—the subliminal self is the soul—the soul is immortal—therefore, the subliminal self with its memory endures for the everlasting to-morrow as well as for the transitory to-day. This memory, when we cast aside the garments of mortality, will flood our spirit as never before, because it will be the only personality of which we are possessed. Our life's course will be inscribed before our eyes, and every trifling incident of our personal history will be graven indelibly upon the walls of memory. Out of ourselves will pass the everlasting sentence of happiness or despair.

There is another remarkable thing about memory. We hear the aged recount the scenes of their lives in minutest detail. They recall every trivial incident, even to the date of the occurrence, the state of the weather, the color of dress, and the inflexion of language. We, in our youth, or early maturity, wonder as we listen. We find it difficult to remember even the importunate happenings of the past decade. It is a psychological fact that as people grow older memory becomes possessed of a graphic realism not duplicated up to the age of three score years and ten. The subconscious self comes uppermost. The logical supposition, then, is this—if memory close to the period of natural death is enlightened, after death, memory, which is indestructible, shall be cleared of all impediment.

Memory is one of the Books in that small-sized library of ours which shall judge us at the last. Let us then beware of what we are storing our memory with, of what we are writing for all time in that Book. Good impressions shall bear us in good stead, wicked sentences shall shine forth in indelible ink forever. What horrible reading we have got there already! Ill-temper, impurity, dishonesty, slander, unneighborliness. We must set to work at once to remedy matters. We may not erase that which has been written, but we may strive to balance and outweigh evil with good. The worst kind of hell may, for all we know,

consist in an eternal recollection of wickedness. Heaven may find its fullest expression in an eternal remembrance of virtue.

(2) *There is the Book of Conscience:* Conscience is a much-disputed term. The theory of conscience ranges from that of the evolutionist, that in the process of development through the ages we have learned by experience what is injurious and what is beneficial to our well-being, and so have inherited instinctive tendencies, through the belief of the altruist, that to do wrong brings pain, and to do right brings happiness, up to the Christian conviction, that conscience is the categorical imperative of God warning, and advising us to do right in spite of bodily misfortune and distress. As recipients of the revelation of the Christ we believe conscience in itself to be absolute; that it is only relative in relation to ourselves, and the present conception of morality. Right is everlastingly right, and wrong is everlastingly wrong.

The trouble is that we are prone to drug conscience. Many people have the morphine habit in connection with conscience. The conscience surface is pricked all over with injections, and presents a deplorable sight to the practiced eye. We have a social conscience; we have a club conscience; we have a Sunday and a Monday conscience; we have a business conscience; we have a domestic conscience; we have a man and a woman conscience;

we have a professional conscience. We are playing fast and loose, hide and seek, with conscience proper. We adjust conscience to our deeds, rather than our deeds to conscience, and, in so doing, we are overcome with the exhilaration of our own ingenuity. The real conscience, however, is there all the time; it is as indestructible as God, for it is God. And, when the shams of earth are lifted off, and the clouds of time have rolled away, there, in the presence of the Great Judge, will be evidenced the true conscience, shorn of all the subterfuges of our worldly deliriums. We shall see ourselves as we really are, and we shall be known even as we are known.

A solemn thought that! "Who may abide the day of His coming, and who shall stand when He appeareth?" Respect your conscience more than you respect your life, for it is your life for time and for eternity. When it whispers take your shoes from off your feet, for the place wherein you stand is Holy Ground. The breath of God is blowing across the room, or rushing along the highways. Make your obeisance before conscience as you would before the visible Presence of Jesus Christ. You would not compose a farce upon God. Then, do not mock conscience. It is one of the Books, and a large Book, to be opened upon the day of the Great Assize.

(3) *There is the Book of Privilege:* This is a

bulky volume, and much that is written in it is also incorporated in the two previous books of memory and conscience, but it contains original matter of its own.

We are living in a Christian country, in the midst of a Christian civilization. We have passed the days of the Ptolemies, and the Pharaohs, of the Caliphs and the Caesars, of the Moors and the Huns, of Frederick the Great and Napoleon the First. Upon us the light of the world is shining. Ancient Pagandom and modern heathendom are outside the pale of our individual and parochial boundaries. We have been admitted into the Fellowship of Christ's Body, and we know in whom we have believed. We are surrounded by, and are breathing, the atmosphere of Privilege.

Now, privilege carries with it awe-inspiring responsibilities. Every increase in knowledge brings in its train corresponding obligations. Better, far better, to be without the revelation of Jesus in life, and the hope of Jesus in death, than to be a professing Christian in the full radiance of the acknowledged gospel and fall short of the expression of our convictions.

There is the chapter in the book of privilege about sacraments. Does it contain an account of Baptism, and Confirmation, and the Holy Communion systematically received?

There is the chapter upon church attendance.

Are the entries numerous, and regular, or are they interpolated with remarks about the weather? With some of us there must be many blank spaces!

There is the chapter upon brotherliness. Is it illustrated with photographs of the houses of the poor with the figure of ourselves in bold relief against the dilapidated furniture?

How about all the chapters in the book of privilege? Poor reading, some of it, I warrant! Miserable stuff, some of it. Much "padding", and the "purple patches" few and far between. Enough to send the watchful devil to sleep in its wearisome monotony!

"And the Lord said unto Moses, whosoever hath sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book." We are writing in our own book, which is, in truth, God's book—God's book of privilege. It behooves us to live up to our advantages.

These, then, are the books: Volume 1, Memory; Volume 2, Conscience; Volume 3, Privilege.

Upon the contents of these books we shall be judged, aye, we shall judge ourselves.

There is a judgment day. Shall the judge claim us as his children; shall He welcome us as His servants? The answer depends entirely upon ourselves, upon the quality of the writing in each one of our books.

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; *and the books were opened.*"

A PREGNANT SAYING

St. Mark 14: 7. "Me ye have not always."

THE pregnant saying is the word of Jesus: "Me ye have not always."

The context is familiar. The Master is sitting at meat in the house of a prominent citizen of the community in which so many of His mighty deeds were done; sharing in the hospitality of the hour, and showing himself to be thoroughly human in His love of convivial comradeship; when a woman of notorious character, having evaded the vigilance of the servants of the establishment, enters the room unannounced, and rushing to His side breaks a box of precious ointment which she carries with her, and pours the fumous contents upon His blessed feet; those feet which were ever busy in the service of the needy, and the dispossessed. The guests at the dinner are astonished, as well they might be, for the interruption is unconventional to a degree, and bewildering in its suddenness. The Disciples present are overcome with astonishment, and from one of

their number there bursts forth the indignant, and unpremeditated protest, "What a useless and unnecessary waste. This ointment might have been sold for a large sum of money, and the proceeds distributed among the poor."

What is the attitude of Jesus toward the occurrence? Will He not participate in the universal disgust that the proprieties should be so outraged, and commend the utilitarian observation of His esteemed companion? He likes things to be done decently and in order; He has a sense of fitness never equalled by any man before or since; He is "the greatest gentleman who ever drew the breath of life"; and the unseemliness of the incident must have lacerated the sensitiveness of His quivering spirit. Will He not admonish the woman for an act which timely in itself was ill-timed in its performance? Moreover: He loves the poor. Their welfare is His preëminent concern. To their alleviation He has addressed Himself throughout His previous ministry. Will He not, then, rebuke the extravagance of Mary?

Surely, His answer to the interrogation of His Disciple, an answer which placed the whole matter in its divine perspective, is in keeping with His originality, with that inherent capacity for surprise which was remarked by those who said, "never man spake as this man." "Leave her alone; it is a beautiful work that she hath wrought on Me. For ye

have the poor with you all the time; but Me ye have not always."

You see the force of Christ's contention. He had not forgotten the poor, nor estimated superficially the value of three hundred pence as related to their needs; but the poor were a lasting quantity and quality, and might be assisted at any time, whereas, because of the shortness of His stay on earth, if He was to be honored at all it must be now or never.

The Master is here announcing a great, and a universal truth. He is touching upon *The Relative Value of Opportunities.* He says in effect—"the good is not necessarily the best, and the man who would do homage to the best must be far-seeing enough, and sufficiently brave, to rise above the temptation of doing reverence to the merely good."

Life is possessed of more than economic aspects, and the spirit of generosity as exhibited under special circumstances is altogether beyond computation in Dollars and Cents.

Let us look at this principle in our own lives, and gather the full force of its application.

The Poor and Jesus. There are privileges that may be enjoyed at any time; commonplace opportunities that recur with the regularity of clockwork; but there are other privileges that are sealed with a time limit—exceptional privileges that come

seldom, and from the necessity of the case must be grasped immediately to be grasped at all. The Poor! Why; they besiege us on every side; the confused crying of their need oppresses us from the cradle to the grave; the hands with itching palms are forever uplifted in importunate supplication. Whenever we will we may do them good. But, Jesus is unique: His demands are exceptional demands; His expectation for the soul is timed to the moment; and our relation to Him, even though we abide in Him throughout the years, is critical in its immanency.

What are some of our exceptional opportunities? (1) *Opportunities of Getting Good. There is Sunday.* We treat Sunday lightly; do we not? In the reaction from the puritanical Sunday of our forefathers we have come to play fast and loose with the sanctity of The Lord's Day. The fact remains, however, that Sunday is, in the soul's life, an exceptional opportunity. It is proportioned to the sum total of the years in the ratio of one to seven. We may be the better or the worse for the privileges which Sunday has to offer. It may bless us, or damn us, fifty-two times in the course of three hundred and sixty-five days. The week-days we have ever with us; but Sunday we have not always. The office from Monday morning to Saturday night, and the House of God on Sunday. Is that too much to ask? Is that too

much time to give, and overmuch attention to pay, to the God from whom all blessings flow?

There is Vacation Time. To all of us who work for a livelihood, and who employ rejoicingly the talents that God has given us, the season of vacation is short as compared with the season of occupation. Two, or three, or six weeks a year as against fifty, or forty-nine, or forty-six weeks a year. Work we have ever with us; but holidays we have not always. Is the annual vacation period a period of meditation as well as a period of rest? Is it, in the language of Scripture, "a desert place"; a place where we may recreate our spiritual vitality, and adjust the horizon of our religious thought? Does it bring us any nearer, appreciably nearer, the God of the mountain and the valley and the sea? "Who were you with this summer," said one to another. "I went away alone; but I came back with Jesus Christ," was the answer.

There is Travel. Most of us live in one place most of the time. It is unusual for us to shake off the dust of home, and to see new scenes and faces. We tread the same streets from month's end to month's end; meet the same people; and do the same old things at the same old time in the same old way. Now and then, however, we board the train, and are shot into new environments; exchanging temporarily the community for the world,

and the familiar for the unknown. What do we make of these rare opportunities? We may be among those who would read a novel whilst the car in which they sit is spanning an Alpine gorge; who think more of a comfortable hotel than they do of a brilliant sunset; and who are forever contrasting the new with the old, to the relative depreciation of the former. Locality we have ever with us; but the universe we have not always. It is demeaning to speak of dollars when romance is at our door, and three hundred pence is an insult when nature would work her wonderful work upon our impoverished soul!

Yes, week-days, and workdays, and common sights and common sounds, will come again; they are forever coming again, for they have the habit of return; "the poor we have always with us"; but to him, or to her, who has ears to hear every unusual privilege, Sunday and holiday, and travel, ring out the clarion reminder, "Me ye have not always."

What are some of our exceptional opportunities? (2) *Opportunities of Doing Good. There is the Home.* The home is, for each of us, a transient institution. In the home, of all places, it is too late to break the alabaster box of spikenard when the loved one is in his grave! We are apt to forget—as the usual day runs its usual round—the inestimable privilege of living in intimate communion with those men and women, boys and girls,

whom of all men and women, boys and girls, in all the world we love the best; the members of our own household. The husband, and the wife, and the children; perhaps, an aged father, and a mother with silvered hair; here they are, differentiated with us from all the world, resident under the same roof, participators in the same joys and sorrows, keepers of the same secrets, sharers of the same honor, or dishonor, and worshippers of the same household gods. We are kind to one another—God grant that we may never have the unavailing remorse, the age-long regret, of harsh and brutal treatment—but are we kind enough; as kind as Christ; as affectionate and as tender as Jesus, Son of Mary?

It is right and natural that we should have our friends outside the family circle. Only through such relationships in the outer world may we achieve the stature of our personal possibilities. We may not deny the fact that sometimes "friends may be more than my brothers are to me." But, the home incorporates the citadel of our heart's affection; it is the arena of our most sacred intimacies; and there is something awe-inspiring about the swiftness with which its connections may be sundered. The outside world we have ever with us; but home we have not always. In a few years, or in a tragic moment, the seeming permanency of the home dissolves, and the love-tinged habits of

yesterday are only seen through scalding tears. The faces of friends and acquaintances may be viewed at any time, but the well-known and dearly-loved faces of the fireside are not viewed forever. The man called by professional engagement journeys into a distant city; his heart is light, and he expects on his return to find things as they have ever been; but he is recalled by fatal telegram, and when he enters the sacred precincts of the home his mother is resting in her last long sleep. How he wishes that he had "worked a good work" upon her whilst he had the opportunity! He would break the costliest alabaster box a thousand times for her dear sake. But now she lies with tired feet toward the dawn, and the lips that kissed him are forever cold.

"Me ye have not always." Why, in God's Name, and in the Name of Love, do we take so long a time to learn this simple lesson? Sooner, or later, every home crumbles into dust; sooner, or later, every intimacy blazes into ashes; sooner, or later, in every association, sacred and profane, we hold in our trembling hands only the withered laurels of the past, the wilted flowers of the glorious yesterdays. Why should we forget that our most precious privileges are ours for but an hour, and that life at its longest is altogether too short

for strife, or self. Over all things human, dimly at first and achieving definiteness as the years go on, there is inscribed the word, Ichabod—the glory hath departed. Oh, whilst we possess our special privileges of giving and receiving; e'er the golden bowl is broken at the fountain and the silver cord is loosed; and whilst the voice still speaks that one day shall be silent, "let us do good unto all men; but especially unto them that are the household of Faith." The time is ever here to break our Box of Costly Ointment, and so to work a good work upon men and things; for the shades of night descend when we may work for men and things, at least particular men and special things, no more. "Me," whatever the "Me" may be, "ye have not always."

THE PRODIGAL SON

St. Luke 15: 11-25

OUR Blessed Lord was essentially parabolic in His teaching. He employed the outward and familiar sign to convey the inward and spiritual significance. He used the common sights and experiences of life as a vast ritual through which the eternal ever shines.

Of all His parables the Parable of The Prodigal Son is the pearl. It has the note of immortality. It is true for all time, true to life and character. It commends itself to the taste of all. As a piece of literature, in its majestic simplicity, in its capacity of erecting an indelible portrait upon the lens of the imagination, it is authoritatively stated to be without competition in the languages of the world. As an appeal to the heart of man it has been in the record of Christianity responsible for the conversion of uncounted hosts of sinners.

This chapter, the Fifteenth of St. Luke, records three parables: The Lost Coin, the Lost Sheep,

and The Lost Son. The first two represent God seeking the sinner. The last represents man seeking God. This is ever the process in conversion, be conversion instantaneous or gradual. Conversion is twofold. There is the human impulse, and the divine response; there is the call of God, and the answer of man.

We may not analyze the phenomenon. It defies definition. It is rebellious of regulation. But, of this we may be assured—there must be the two elements: the coming of the creature, and the bringing of the Creator; the drawing of the Creator, and the compliance of the creature.

Blindness to this fact has resulted in the great past severance of Protestant Christianity. If you take the parables of The Lost Coin and The Lost Sheep, and exclude The Parable of The Prodigal Son, you have ultra Calvinism, responsibility thrust solely upon the side of God. If you take the Parable of the Prodigal Son, and eliminate the parables of The Lost Coin and The Lost Sheep, you have ultra arminianism, the entire dependence rests upon man. Either attitude by itself is wrong; the right attitude is only found in the union of the two.

Let us seek the Spiritual Interpretation of the Story: We have the picture of a young man leaving home. He comes to his father with the request, "Give me the portion of goods that belongs

to me; I would be gone into the world." It is a strange request, and significant. The son has evidently grown tired of the restraints of family life. He has become envious of discipline. He chafes at parental control. The call of a seemingly wider vitality is sounding in his ears. He is weary of doing as he is bid, and would fain begin to do as he pleases. It is a familiar picture, and there are many who in retrospect may see the well-worn colors upon the canvas of their early years.

This young man's case, however, is not only typical, it is exaggerated. For some time he had been making things unpleasant at home. His temper was not of the best. He was surly, self-opinionated, selfish. As the days pass, so far as affection for his father is concerned, he becomes a son in name only. He makes this brutal request —"Give me the money that belongs to me, and let me go." He could not even wait until the obvious occurred, and his father died. He is cruel in his impetuosity. Think of the feelings of his father!

Now, you will notice that the father had every right to refuse the request. In North America, when a parent dies, he ordinarily divides his wealth equally among his offspring. In England, in fact or practice, there is the law of Primogeniture—the eldest son receives all, or most, of his father's wealth. But, among the Jews it was customary to leave two-thirds to the elder son, and one-third

to the younger, in families consisting of two boys. If, then, this father had refused his son's importunate demand the younger son had had no legitimate cause of complaint, for his one-third was not legally due until his father's death.

But, the father consented, and gave to the boy his expected inheritance. *Why did he do so?* Surely, because, realizing the intractability of the boy's temperament, and appreciating the uselessness of continued pleading, he determined to let his son learn by sad experience that the way of the transgressor is hard. There are some youths who are altogether incorrigible, and the only school to teach them common sense is the rough Academy of the World.

Now, what, so far, is the spiritual significance of the story? It is the human family epitomized. The younger brother is humanity, and the father is God. The root of sin, whatever be the forms in which it expresses itself, is the wish to be free of the authority of God. The source of evil is selfishness, separation from God and our fellow-men. In the Prodigal we have an illustration of our own wilful selection of destiny. When the human will sets itself in opposition to the divine will, it says in effect, "Give me the portion of goods that belong to me, and let me pursue my own preferences." Yes; let us get beyond the literal, and grasp the figurative import of the parable. Only

on the outside is it the story of an earthly child who outraged an earthly parent. On the inside it is the lasting photograph of our culpable defiance of the prerogatives of God. We turn our backs upon duty, deeming ourselves sufficient unto ourselves, and so we sin. We follow our own sweet pleasure, and so we wound inexpressibly a Loving Father's Heart. This transgression of the Prodigal is our transgression, and our cry must be "God be merciful unto *me* a sinner."

So much for the boy at home; let us follow his career in the world: "He wasted his substance in riotous living." He went out with money in his pocket to have his swill of life. He possessed a fascinating personality. He was one of those characters who reserve all their generosities for society, and all their boorishness for the family circle. With a free hand he scatters his favors upon all with whom he comes in contact, and so becomes the center of an admiring group of companions. A spendthrift in the days of his affluence does not have to go far to seek his friends. He is a magnet for impecunious parasites, and gathers them from the four corners of his environment, even as a flame attracts its multitudinous moths. He is "hail fellow, well met," and is the subject of flattering attentions from other youths more celebrated for their excesses than for their discriminations. What a time he has! The wine flows freely, the

nights are filled with revelry, and the days succeed each other in kaleidoscopic dissipations.

It is the picture of the "fast" young man, the man about town, old or young, the man who, in common parlance, "sows his wild oats." There have been, and there are, analogous cases in every community, and there will be such cases until age comes to regard such behavior as criminal, and youth has decried such bestiality as detrimental in the production of a man. There is such a thing as the rose losing its fragrance, and sin vitiates both mind and body. A moment lost is a moment lost forever, and no one may look for the second time into the weeping face of a vanished hour.

Now, we reach another stage. The Crisis comes: "And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land, and he began to be in want." The day arrived when he had squandered all his patrimony, when his purse was conspicuous for its emptiness, and when, through the inevitable operation of his foolishness, he was in urgent need. He was bankrupt not only in pecuniary resources, but in health and morals as well. He was a physical, a financial, and a spiritual wreck. It is a pathetic dénouement, and the pathos is emphasized through his isolation. Where are now the friends of his prodigality? They have fallen away from him one by one. They pass him by upon the street. Flattery has given way to vituperative comment.

He is openly sneered at as a short-sighted fool.

It is always thus with the boon companions of a sinful past. In the days of our monetary helplessness they flee from us as they would the plague. When the day is fair the motes disport themselves in the rays of the warming sun, but when the darkness gathers, and the desolation of night descends, the gaudy motes are nowhere to be seen. There is no sadder commentary upon sin than the way in which its votaries wring the sinner dry, and leave the pauperized to shift for himself. "Bleed the fool, and so through the process of blood-letting cleave even as the leech, but when the veins are empty cast the corpse aside." That is the motto of the Devil and all his adherents. "There arose a mighty famine in that land." It is always so. Not only is the land of iniquity a far-off land, but it is an arid and a sterile land. There is famine of the heart—want of love. There is famine of the soul—want of peace. There is famine of the mind—want of hope. Love, peace, hope, we leave them all behind us when we deliberately forsake our Father's House, and journey into the distant country of self-aggrandizement.

This is true not merely of the "fast" young man, and the reckless young woman. It is true of all, however respectable and moral they may happen to be, who have turned their backs upon the urgency of God's Friendship, and are living in the world

for the world alone. The heart hungers, the soul thirsts, and the hunger is for the Bread of Life, and the thirst is for "the living waters." There is a mighty famine in the land of personality. If we have all things, but lack the one thing needful, how much, as a question of soul arithmetic, have we? Nothing, aye, and less than nothing. A bestial life is fit for a beast, but it cannot begin to satisfy a man. The Far-Off Land is ever the Land of Famine, and many there be who dwell therein.

What did the Prodigal do? "He went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine." A Jew feeding swine! The degradation is inconceivable to a Gentile mind. Is this our fine young man, the open-handed gentleman, the giddy distributor of another's wealth, whose advent into the community had created such a stir in the circles of polite society, dazzling the men, and fluttering the maidens' hearts? Romance is over, and the hideous facts appear. The froth has been blown from the wine cup, and the bottom of the chalice of iniquity shines clear. The tinsel has been torn to shreds, and the gilt reveals its tawdriness. The cesspool gives up its dead, and upon its top there floats harlotry, strangled innocence, disillusionment, glaring memories, and vanished opportunities.

Have you ever fed the swine? Have you ever sounded the deeps of a life lived apart from God? Have you measured the Valley of Pleasure, and reached the limits of sensual gratification? If so, then, you realize that with this young man the time of reaction had come. The father's policy, the only policy possible under the circumstances, had reached its justification, and the Prodigal is at last aware of the fact that "the wages of sin is death."

So we come to the son's repentance, and his return: "But when he came to himself he said." Then he had been beside himself before? His conduct had been irrational and insane? It had not been natural for him to sow his wild oats? It had not been normal for the youth to have his fling? He said to himself, "I have been a fool, a madman. I had the best of homes, the best of fathers, and I forfeited happiness for a chimera, peace for the slough of sensuality. Why, there are hirelings in my father's house who are better off than I am, and who would not for the world change their security of service for my profligate liberty. I will arise and go to my father, and say unto him, Father I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants."

Now, notice that the mere resolution did not save the unhappy man. The way to hell may be

paved with good resolutions. We have made a thousand good resolutions—where are they now? A man is not redeemed by a good resolution. Action alone spells redemption. The Prodigal did not think to himself, "some day I will present myself at the homestead and take them all by surprise." He did not commune within himself thus, "I must wait until I exchange these rags for more becoming raiment, else my fastidious brother will laugh at me." There was no *some day;* there was no *waiting.* It was *"I will arise and go,"* and he went.

Notice further the words, "I have sinned." No puppy phrases now. Not, "I have been fast" —"I have been a trifle wild." He is absolutely frank, and indulges in no euphemisms. "Father, I have *sinned".* This, is ever the mark of sincere repentance. We speak no longer of "predestination," of "heredity," of "environment," of "human nature." We do not shift the responsibility upon others. We call a spade a spade, and lay the deformity at our own door. There is no juggling with anaemic phrases. We cry from the depths of a heart convinced, and convicted, "I have *sinned."* The true penitent places the blame upon self alone. *"I* have sinned against heaven and before thee." The consciousness of guilt against God is placed first, the consciousness of guilt against the earthly parent comes last. This is the right order. All sin is sin against God. I sin against my

neighbor—that is sin against God. I sin against myself—that is sin against God. I am drunken, I am impure, I am envious, I am dishonest, I am selfish. Then against God I am drunken, impure, envious, dishonest, selfish. Let there be no misconception here. The first four and the last six of the Ten Commandments are bound indissolubly together.

"And he arose, and came to his father." How was he received? He did not deserve so much as a servant's place. He had broken his father's heart, and well night brought down his gray hairs in sorrow to the grave. The father had discharged his obligation when at his son's request he had divided with him his inheritance.

But there is one thing that we may count upon —there is one thing we may *bank* upon—and that is a father's heart.

How gracious was the welcome: "But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him."—"Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet, and bring hither the fatted calf and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; was lost and is found. And they began to be merry."

Verily, "The love of God is broader than the measure of man's mind, and the heart of the

Eternal is most wonderfully kind." Verily, "There is more joy among the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance."

The Prodigal is "safe home at last." May such safety, for time and for eternity, be ours in the Arms of God.

A PATRIOTIC SERMON ON THE PILGRIM FATHERS

Joshua 24: 2. "Your Fathers."

THE Golden Age is still before us. It is, consciously or unconsciously, the great attainment toward which as individuals and as nations we persistently, and forever strive.

"We are living, we are dwelling, in a grand and awful time;
In an age on ages telling to be living is sublime."

The greatest, however, is yet to be, and the lodestar of all human effort shines as a beacon light in the firmament of our present darkness. The Golden Age, when Christ shall reign from the rivers to the ends of the earth, is still before us.

Obsessed with the future, however, there is a duty which we owe to the past, and it is only through our loyalty to that duty that the future in its fulness may ultimately be achieved. For the past, in its virtues, in its conquests, in its garnered fruitage, in its wealth of thought, and its richness

of experience, is a necessary equipment for the tasks of to-day, and an essential preparation for the apocalypse of to-morrow.

Blessed is that Nation, whether Hebrew or American, that has great men for its ancestors, whose first pages are charged with interest, and whose Fathers were men of God. The history of such a Nation will send a thrill of inspiration through the body politic from age to age, and serve to guard the liberties, the principles, and the faith of unending generations.

It is well, then, at such a time as this, when Americanism would come into its own, and come into its own in relation to its obligations to humanity, that we should run back in thought, and familiarize ourselves with the nobility of character and resolve of those whom we may justly account the Fathers of our Country.

It has been said that in its possession of noble ancestry the American Republic is like the Commonwealth of Israel. Israel has Abraham, who left his native land to found a nation for God's holy purposes. So America has the Pilgrim Fathers, who left their native land for precisely the same purpose. They took possession of this continent for us, and they sowed the seed which has fruited into the boasted institutions of our well-loved Country. They left us a free Church, and a free State, and a system of free schools. They left us

the bejewelled principle which we have more or less incarnated in working form: All men are equal before the law. The glory of our Nation to-day is, as it were, the Oak Tree which has sprung from the acorn which they planted.

"Your Fathers," the Pilgrim Fathers! Let us glance briefly at their story, and apply some of the lessons that issue therefrom to the needs and necessities of the present day:

The Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock on the 21st of December, in the year 1620. To know why they landed there, or anywhere, we must go back and familiarize ourselves with certain historical facts. Henry the Eighth, as we all know, threw off his allegiance to the Roman Pontiff, and constituted himself the head of the Church in his own land. His motives, of course, were contemptible—at any rate his ostensible motives—for they were impelled by the fact that the Pope refused to sanction his desired divorce; but the step, however bad, was overruled for good, and his breach with Rome was the starting point of better things for England and for the world. Queen Mary took the English Church back into allegiance with Rome, but after her short-lived ascendency Queen Elizabeth broke again with all foreign domination, and made the Church of England free. Elizabeth was a religious tyrant. She made herself supreme head of the Church, and passed laws

to the effect that all people should conform to her way of religious thinking. We might say that she established censorship over the opinions of her subjects, and constituted herself Sovereign over the English conscience. Taking advantage of her position she determined to create religious uniformity.

It is here that the Pilgrims come in. They could not, and they would not, conform to religious uniformity. Their reasons, or principles, were threefold. (1) Christ is the sole Head of the Church, and it is presumption and usurpation for any man or woman, for any human being, to claim to be head of the Church, or to dictate the Creed, or prescribe the policy of the Church. (2) The Bible is the sole rule of faith and practice. All the Ordinances, as well as all the ornaments of the Church, must have divine sanction, and literal warrant in the Word of God. (3) The Church is an independent institution, ruled by the people under God. An Established Church in the technical sense is a violation of the truth.

Believing all this, the Pilgrims perforce withdrew from the fellowship of the Established Church of England. They organized churches of their own; churches where they preached the Truth as they understood it. The result of this withdrawal was persecution by the reigning powers in the Church, and persecution by the civil government

of England. Matters became so unbearable, even reaching to the execution of three men, that many individuals, and whole congregations, fled to Holland, where religious liberty was assured for all.

Now the story narrows itself, and the fortunes of one congregation claim our attention exclusively. This congregation was known as the Mayflower church, and it was organized, and began its life in Scrooby, Nottinghamshire. In this church were men destined to be famous in the Plymouth Colony. There was William Brewster, the Elder, and the leader of finance. There were his children, Patience, and Fear, and Love, and Wrestling—good Bunyan names! There was William Bradford, the future historian of the church, and Governor of Plymouth Colony. Under persecution, this congregation retired first to Amsterdam, and thence to Leyden, where it remained some twelve years. After this there came the embarkation for America. This step was undertaken for the following reasons: (1) There was no room for growth in Holland, and there was the well-founded fear that the whole enterprise would come to nothing. (2) The members of the congregation were anxious about their children. The Sabbath Day was not reverenced at Leyden, and there was the danger that the young people should become corrupted in a godless environment. (3) There was the missionary impulse; the burning desire to make the

Gospel known in remote parts of the earth. Actuated by these reasons the congregation sailed eventually from Plymouth in the good Ship Mayflower for the distant shores of America. The passenger list comprised one hundred and two souls. A small stock to give birth to the multitudinous Mayflowerians of to-day!

Just imagine what that passage of more than nine weeks must have meant, with all its hardships, and wanderings, for men, and women, and children. The final landing was made, of course, on the famous rock, and not a large rock at that, which they called Plymouth, in honor of the English port from whence they had sailed. Moreover, the sufferings of the exiles were but well begun when they set foot upon the rugged headlands of the Atlantic. Sickness, and hunger, and cold, and perils from savages were daily experiences borne with true Christian fortitude. Half of the Colony died during the first year. Like the heroes of olden time, however, they held on, and committed themselves and their ways to the God who careth for His children who care over much for Him. Ultimately a better future opened, and there began the building of the church, and the building of the schoolhouse, and the building of homes. A life commenced which opened and broadened until Plymouth Colony found confederation in the confederation of the Colonies, and the confederation of

the Colonies transformed itself into the Republic.

Now, what are some of the lessons from the Pilgrim Fathers that we may read and apply?

(1) *To be great as a people, and to solve our national difficulties as they ought to be solved, we must have something of the Pilgrims' loyalty to the Bible:* The Pilgrims gathered their principles from the Word of God; not from some metaphysical pronouncement issued from the pen of some pragmatical Philosopher. It is the Truth that makes men free, and they discovered that liberating truth in the Library that stretches from Genesis to Revelation.

Milton was right when he said, "The Bible doth more clearly teach the solid rules of civil government than all the eloquence of Greece or Rome." "There is no Book like the Bible," says Dr. Gregg, "to inspire liberty. It has inspired all the liberty that has found embodiment in our national life. It struck Plymouth Rock, and immediately that rock became our American Horeb to send forth throughout the generations a perpetual stream of blessing. It was the Bible that inspired the heroes of '76. It was the Bible that inspired Patrick Henry. His words, 'Give me liberty, or give me death,' were not original with himself. The sentiment was a Bible sentiment. Solomon expressed it in substance when he said, 'I praise the dead who are already dead,

and who have escaped human woe, more than ye living, who are miserably alive.' Liberty Loving Men have ever been Bible Loving Men. The Lollards in England, the adherents of Luther in Germany, the followers of Knox in Scotland, the Huguenots of France, the friends of Zwingli in Switzerland, Cromwell and his Ironsides—all these were lovers of the Bible, and all these were heroes in liberty's cause." Only as we are true to the Book of the Pilgrims, the Bible, may we expect to be true to, and to carry on, the Pilgrim's Cause; for the atmosphere of the Pilgrims' Book is to be found in our National Constitution, in the Declaration of Independence, and finally in the crowning glory of our Nation—the Emancipation Proclamation.

If we would do the right thing as men; if we would do the right thing as citizens; if we would be of that deposit force which is going to impel America to do the right thing as a Nation at the present time—we must be readers of, and not merely readers of but experts in the Word of God.

(2) *To be great as a people we must face our difficulties with the heroism and self-sacrifice with which the Pilgrim Fathers faced the difficulties of their day and generation:* To be true to our Country, in foul weather as well as in fair, is the best manner in which we may honor the memory of the Fathers of our Country. The best patriot

is ever he who gives the best manhood to his Country. What we need preëminently to-day is grand men for a great hour. The United States calls at this time of crisis for hundreds and thousands and millions of men—real men, true men, men of heart as well as of mind, above all men of conscience and of character. There is no long and dreary ocean's voyage before us; there is no endurance of cold and of hunger, of unrestricted sickness and overwhelming death, to be borne; there is no pioneer work of a material kind to be achieved; but there are difficulties bounding us upon every side; difficulties peculiar to our present circumstances as a nation. There is treason abroad. Yes; Treason. There is the treason of a cowardly and self-seeking prosperity, which keeps still silence, or which prates in mellifluous polysyllables, when patriotism and honor, and the destruction of our fellow citizens, call for vindication in the arena of the politics of the world. There is such a thing as the traitor in time of peace as well as the traitor in time of war, and such a traitor should be shot —shot with the cannon of universal public indignation, and execration. He deserves little consideration of mercy, and every consideration of fulsome justice. He should at least be blackballed, and be buried with becoming notoriety in everlasting oblivion.

From the Pilgrim Fathers we learn this lesson,

and it is written in letters of gold so that all may see; For the furtherance of the allied cause of God and of our Country we must have manhood. Men are needed, and men are needed more than principles. Character is demanded, and character even more than creed. Only so may we, in homely parlance, "play the game," and ceasing from exuberant speech go in, go in fathoms deep, for deeds.

Let us as Americans, as followers of our Fathers, band around the Bible and our manhood, that honoring the right, the right may ever honor us; and with that honor which is the respect of our fellow men, and the commendation of our God.

A PATRIOTIC SERMON ON GEORGE WASHINGTON

Acts 11: 24. "For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith."

SUCH was George Washington, the Father of our Republic, the Immortal Statesman whose birthday we commemorate this week. His genius was preëminently the genius of goodness. He was not a brilliant man, as we understand the word brilliant; he was not possessed of mental greatness, as we account mental greatness in the giant minds of history; he was a man of exceptional character —a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith.

Let us glance briefly at his life, and consider some of the obvious lessons that flow therefrom.

George Washington came into life in what we might call plain fashion, and his boyhood days were conspicuous for their lack of superior advantages. His early education was similar to that of

Abraham Lincoln; the only other American up to the present time who is able to stand life size beside him and not suffer in the comparison. Washington never saw the inside of a university, save as a visitor, and his schooling was achieved at a low grade private school, taught by the parish sexton. Deprived of school advantages, however, he assiduously trained himself outside of school. He literally drilled himself in self-control; in regularity of occupation; in the gentle art of politeness; and in the fear of God. He self-consciously laid down rules and regulations to guide him in the avoidance of all that would offend the most refined taste, and appreciated the fact that decorum and politeness are among the greatest influences whereby a man of self-respect may expect to be respected by his fellow men.

At the age of seventeen Washington earned his livelihood as a surveyor of public lands. In this vocation he continued for three years. This proved to be a wholesome discipline, for at the age of twenty he stood forth six feet two inches in height, broad shouldered, and full-chested, physically every whit a man. It also made him eminently practical; familiarized him with fatigue and exposure; and laid the foundations of his future soldier-like qualities. At the conclusion of this period he took a commission from the colony of Virginia, and participated in the French and Indian Wars. After

this he went with his brother to the West Indies. In the West Indies his brother died, and Washington came into possession of Mount Vernon. When twenty-seven years old Washington married a charming and a wealthy widow; a love match, in which money just happened to be thrown in—money that stood him in good stead in Revolutionary Times, and enabled him the better to serve his country.

At the age of forty-two he became a member of the first general Congress of the Colonies, and less than three years later he was, through the influence of John Adams, selected as Commander-in-chief of the American forces. He remained at the head of the Army for seven years, during which time his foot never once stepped across the threshold of his own home. The history of these seven years is familiar to you all; they were years of intense interest; years of the travailing of a Nation born from the womb of another Nation; and years which ranged from the raising of the siege of Boston to the surrender of the British Army at Yorktown.

Washington's services during the Revolution illustrate his character, and set forth his peculiar endowments. He was persistently active; full of untiring energy; possessed of extraordinary executive ability; but he was also conspicuous for his passive virtues. In the long run it was his

ownership of these virtues that won the day; for his conquest of the British was achieved in the final estimate through unadulterated patience, and strategy of retreat, until he wore down the aggressiveness and resistance of his enemies by his long continuance.

When the War was over, Washington's work was by no means done. Many more years of patriotic service were demanded of him by his Country. The most perilous period in the history of the United States was the four years subsequent to the Revolution. This era has been called by John Fiske, "the critical era"; and a critical era it undoubtedly was. During the War the Nation had been united in a common purpose, a purpose calling for the obliteration of all factional politics; but when the War was over, and the danger from the outside had been summarily and successfully dealt with, there loomed a danger from within, and each State became jealous of every other State, and sought not its neighbor's profit, but its own. There was also great financial distress. There was civil war in North Carolina, and there was revolt in Pennsylvania. The demand became paramount for a permanent consolidation of all the territories of the Union; for better Articles of confederation; and for a wider and more representative Central Government. This demand, or these series of demands, originated the convention which framed the

Constitution, and of this Convention George Washington was Chairman. The Constitution framed and adopted, Washington became the first President. We learn from irrefutable sources that in this connection the office sought the man—the man did not seek the office. We may say, in truth, that every position which Washington held in the public service was forced upon him. He accepted governmental offices only from a sense of duty, and out of the conscientious desire to serve his country.

Having served as President for eight years, the wise limit of presidential rule for any man, Washington retired to the privacy of his home at Mount Vernon, and lived in quietness and peace till death called him to the larger life of Eternity—preserved by God for His faithful servants who have promoted, in large measure or in small, the Kingdom of God among the children of men. When he died all America mourned for him, and the Nations of the earth joined with America in the regret that a great man had fallen in Israel. The flags of France were craped, and even the flags of Great Britain and her remaining Colonies floated at half mast—for, as Goldwin Smith has said, "England felt that Washington had fought against the Government of George the Third, and not against England."

Such, in brief, is our Washington. This week we stand in his undying presence, and feel his

power. He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith, and this Nation is a great Nation largely because of him.

Let us hear the voice of George Washington to-day. What does he say to us upon whom these present ends of the world have come; who are face to face with a crisis approximating the crisis through which he so skilfully steered the Ship of State? Let us read and apply some of the lessons of his life, and apply them as in the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

It seems to me that Washington says three things; three things which if we heed, and follow, will have their part in the making of the great Ultimate America of the future.

(1) *Americans, Give Your Country a True Manhood:* A Nation is the making place of men; "show us your man," land cries to land; and as our manhood is strong so, and only so, may our Country be four-square to all the winds that blow. Our character as a people is the character of our separate citizens. The individual is the solution of all our problems, and the secret of all our greatness. Society must be regenerated; yes, but the only way to regenerate society is by regenerating the atoms of society. Our patriotism may never rise higher than our morals, and it will ever sink to the level of our immorality.

The vital question, then, is: *What Are You?*

A man of truth; a sober man; an honest man; a man who finds his sufficiency of life in the sufficiency which comes of adherence to the highest motives and the noblest principles? Show me a nation of such men, and I will show you a magnificent Nation, a Nation of civil and religious liberties, and a Nation whose career is a career of continued exaltation. We must have good men; not necessarily clever men, nor smart men, for clever and smart men are innately stupid and dull, but good men; men like Washington who showed for all time that goodness, not intellect, is the equivalent of greatness. The genius of character —that is what we need above all else.

"God give us men! A time like this demands
Clean minds, pure hearts, true faith, and ready hands."

Yes; you must serve your Country, and in no other way may you serve your Country so well as by being good—just good.

(2) *The Voice of Washington says, Be Intense Americans:* We must see to it that there is no division of loyalty upon the part of our citizens. Of the foreign-born, and of those of foreign parentage, we must expect, if not patriotism, at least loyalty. We have opened the gates of our Nation to all the peoples of the world, and we have the right to expect that those whom we have welcomed shall welcome us in return, and pay due deference

to our laws and ideals. Only upon such conditions may we continue to harbor them, and give them all that life holds most dear, security of life and limb, and the privilege of equal opportunity. It is only equitable and of the justice of things that those who are participators in our generous hospitality should, if they determine to remain among us, become naturalized citizens of our Republic, and that in the meantime they should behave themselves as courteous guests in the banqueting house of a courteous host. We have waved the flag of our invitation to strangers on the understanding that they are to become friends, and more than friends—fellow-citizens, and equal sharers in a common burden. We have invited these people to work out with us Americanism, and Americanism of the most undiluted type. The oath of naturalization is neither more nor less than an oath of purgation whereby all foreign allegiance is forever renounced. The man who takes it in its spirit is born into a new civil life. By propaganda and, if needs be, by ramified restriction, we must see to it that that oath is kept in purpose as well as in intent. "The Stars and Stripes must be the one flag for all, and there must be one sovereign for all—the will of the people exercised according to the letter and the spirit of the National Constitution."

Finally: *The Voice of Washington says that*

America Must, Whatever the Sacrifice, Hold Her Leadership Among the Nations of the Earth: We are faced with many problems. There is the money problem, one of our greatest problems, and withal one of our greatest dangers; there is the race problem, and the educational problem, and the problem of our foreign policy; and all these problems must be solved not merely in relation to ourselves, but in relation to humanity. The oppressed in all the countries of the world, especially in this era of unprecedented oppression, are looking toward America for light; for sympathetic help; and for guidance in conduct and diplomacy. In Nineteen Hundred and Seventeen we have an extraordinary mission to the universe. The eyes of the whole world, civilized and uncivilized, Christian and pagan, are focussed upon our every move, and our national decisions as related to other nations are the subject of hourly commendation or condemnation in all the newspapers and parliaments of the world.

Shall we be true to the trust which is being imposed in us? Shall we rise to the greatness, perchance the greatness of unprecedented sacrifice, which is expected of our favored and influential position among the governments of the hemispheres? God grant that we may—and abundantly so. Then,

"Sail on, O Ship of State!
Sail on, O Union, strong and great!
Humanity, with all its fears,
With all its hopes of future years,
Is hanging breathless on thy fate."

A SERMON UPON UNUSUAL METHODS *

St. Mark 2: 4. "And when they could not come nigh unto Him for the press, they uncovered the roof."

THE incident is familiar to all readers of the New Testament. It is Capernaum, the central city of Christ's Galilean ministry. Jesus is staying in the house of a friend. As soon as the inhabitants are aware of His presence they leave their businesses, and domestic duties, and flock to hear Him.

In the community there is a palsied man, bedridden for many years, and accepting his disability as a permanent condition. His neighbors tell him of the miracle worker in their midst; enumerating a long list of cures effected by His magic touch. At first the sick man is incredulous, but, soon, the power of suggestion does its work. He gives a reluctant consent to be brought into contact with Jesus. His neighbors, three on one side, and three

* This sermon is based upon a study by Dr. Joseph Parker,

on another side, and one at either end, lift the bed with its human freight bodily from the floor, and, passing through the door of the house, traverse, amid much curiosity, the narrow streets of the town until they come to the house where Jesus is. Here they are met with a disappointment—the crowd is so dense that even the sidewalk is thronged with people unable to gain an entrance. The palsied man expostulates, and desires to be conveyed back to his home; but his attendants will not hear of such a course, and, after consultation, they take the sufferer up the steps, which were always to be found on the outside walls of an eastern house, and, drawing aside the canvas which served as a roof, they lower their burden through the opening to the Feet of Christ. And, The Master sees the man, and compelled by his faith, and the faith of his companions, grants the craved for blessing, and the invalid is restored to health.

There are many lessons in the well-known story; but the idea which I desire to elaborate to-day is this: *If you want to get close to Jesus, and to be the recipient of His bounty, unusual methods are as legitimate and as effective as usual methods. You may always achieve your ambition somehow, if you are in living earnest.*

(1) *Do you really want to see Jesus Christ?* I would answer that question for you in the affirmative. Whatever your consciousness, or uncon-

sciousness, of the fact you want to see and to know Jesus Christ more than anything else in the world. You are hungry for Him; you are lonely without Him; and this your soul knows right well.

But; for what purpose do you want to see Christ? Everything depends upon your attitude to that enquiry. Christ will not answer some calls, however voiciferous they may happen to be. Herod expected to see a miracle done by Him, and Jesus turned into a cold, unresponsive stone; looked at Herod as a corpse might have looked at him; and answered him not a word. Do you want to see Him upon real, soul business? Then, He will stay up all night with an earnest Nicodemus. He is silent to speculation; He is dumb to curiosity; but, to sincerity He opens the flood gates of His love.

More than this: Are you prepared to take the roof away rather than not see Him? Are you ready for unusual methods, for peculiar and eccentric ways, rather than be baffled in your quest after the Son of God? We must not, of course, be eccentric merely for the sake of eccentricity. If these men in our story had uncovered the roof without first going to the door, Christ would have rebuked them. There is an eccentricity which is naught else than base vulgarity. But, if we go to the door, and cannot gain an entrance in the regular way, then a door must be made, even though

it be made through the roof. Circumstances are to be treated originally for the achievement of a worthy purpose.

We would see and know Jesus, then; we are reverent in our desire; and we are prepared, if needs be, for extraordinary procedure.

How may we see Him? There are many doors to the House of His abode. *Let us try the first.* How crowded it is! Long bearded men fill up the vestibule; venerable men, with intelligence shining in their eyes. Their bearing denotes them to be men of culture and refinement. We cannot pass through them, however, because we have not mastered their letters. These are the Rabbis of the Church, and, unless we swing with them over the centuries, we cannot pass that way.

Let us try another door: It is thronged. Men are here with the aroma of the midnight oil upon their faces. They talk long and hard words; we never heard our mothers use such a vocabulary. Each word is a word of ten syllables, and requires a sort of verbal surgery to take it to pieces. These are the philosophers and metaphysicians. We cannot elbow our way through their company. We are too concrete and matter of fact, for their abstract subtleties.

Here is another door: It is barred by a surging multitude. We see men reasoning in high argument; proving and disproving; reaching con-

clusions, and destroying suppositions. They have weights and scales and measures. These are the logicians, the argumentarians, and the controversialists. They are blocking our progress. You and I, poor broken hearts, cannot get in there! What shall we do? Go home again? No; for we have come to find Jesus, and find Jesus we must.

Here is a fourth door: Once more the surging press. A strange crowd this! Men are burning incense; ringing bells; performing ceremonies; and gesticulating in wierdest fashion. Who are these? Why; the ceremonialists. They have their cut and dried doctrines; they are sure of their position beyond peradventure. These are the ecclesiastics; men who have clerical tailors all to themselves. We cannot get through here; the atmosphere is positively nauseating.

Shall we give up? No. We have come to find Christ, and find Him we must. What shall we do?

Why: We must resort to unusual ways. There are those who say that they would feign enter the House where Christ is, but that they cannot find their way through the rabbis, or through the philosophers, or through the logicians, or through the ecclesiastics. Shame on them. They are not in earnest. They would never permit a human friend to escape that way.

Nicodemus found a way: It was a long day's waiting; night arrived; and the darkness took him

as a veiled friend to the abode of the Saviour, and he and Jesus sat up until the morning's light, and Nicodemus was born again.

Zacchaeus found a way: He was short; he could not see over the shoulders of the crowd; but he climbed up into a sycamore tree, dapper gentleman that he was he was not afraid of ridicule, and he saw the procession as it passed by, and he attracted the attention of Jesus, and that day salvation came to his house.

There was a woman who found a way: She said, "if I may but touch the hem of His garment I shall be healed." She did it silently; but Jesus knew, for He said, "Who hath touched Me? Some finger hath taken life out of Me; whose finger was it?" And the woman was made whole; for there is a rude touch that gets nothing, and there is a sensitive touch that extracts lightning from God. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear"; and he that hath fingers to touch, let him touch.

Do you want to see Jesus? Then, there is a permissive violence. "They uncovered the roof; and when they had broken it up". That is the way to talk. These men would not let fifteen feet of canvas stand between them and the Healer of the Universe. When Christ saw their faith He said, "Son; thy sins be forgiven thee!" That is His consistent reply to earnestness. Unusual ways are permitted, and commended, under certain circum-

stances. Where there is a will there is always a way, some way.

This is where the Church has oftentimes gone wrong. The Church has its methods, and its cut and dried plans, and its neat way of doing things. The Church needs a greater breadth; she ought to be turned to her multifarious uses. We must make the Church as wide as all temperaments; as big as all differing aspects of truth, and as universal as God. That all men may come to find Christ within the fold of the Church the Church must have its amenable roof as well as its orthodox doors! The Church was made for man; not man for the Church. If we cannot find Christ in the accepted manner, then, if we never find Him we have only ourselves to blame. Jesus says, "I would; but ye would not. Ye would not come unto Me that ye might have life."

It is not easy to see and to know Christ. It means battle, and pressure, and determination, and personal ingenuity. "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way." The journey is over a mound called Calvary. "Except a man deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me, he cannot be My disciple." To one man Jesus said, "sell all that thou hast, and come." To another man, "except a man hate his father and his mother, he cannot be My disciple." To still another man, "the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head."

Will you find Christ? Then, all these unusual methods, and many more, all this individualism, are open for your expressive application. Orthodoxy or heterodoxy are your avenues of approach. The roof is before you as a sure expedient when the doors are blocked.

I set before you the gates of the Kingdom of God; I open them in the Name of Jesus Christ. To weary people He says, "come unto Me, and I will give you rest." To thirsty men He says, "if any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink."

Blessed be God for His Word; for we have read to-day that if any man really desires to see and to know the Son of God, him will the Son of God both see and know, *and* heal.

SIMON PETER AND SIMON THE TANNER. AN ORDINATION SERMON

Acts 10: 6. "He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea-side."

A GOOD deal is made of this man and his residence. "It came to pass that he tarried many days in Joppa with one Simon a tanner." "*Go* therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon whose surname is Peter, for he lodgeth in the house of one Simon a tanner by the sea-side."

There are few men whose names and addresses are given so repeatedly and conspicuously in the Bible. Such detail must stand for something. There must be more in the matter than a superficial reading would suggest.

What have we to do with Peter's lodging or with Peter's host? Simon is dead long since, the house has crumbled into dust; and Peter has long ago passed into celestial spheres. We would hear about something more important in an inspired book. The error is on our side. If we could grasp

our text in the totality of its meaning and suggestion we would discover that the whole record of Christianity is contained in this verse.

In order to understand this we must familiarize ourselves with a certain grotesque aspect of Jewish history; we must come to regard Tanners with the eye of the ancient Jew: The attitude was this, "The world cannot get along without Tanners, but woe to that man who is a tanner." To get an old-time Jew to lodge with a tanner would require, so to speak, the combined energy of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The Jew, as you know, made much of the letter, whatever he did with the spirit. He was intensely scrupulous, jealously ritualistic; he was nothing if not ceremonial. You remember the levitical law of marriage. If a brother died without issue, he was to be succeeded by his brother. That law was fixed and final; but there was one exception to it. If the succeeding brother was a Tanner the law was suspended. We are also told by the same learned authorities that if a bride discovered that her husband was a Tanner, the marriage was dissolved. Moreover, the house of the Tanner was always at the east end of the town. It is significant that Simon's house was by the sea-side. The Jews pushed the Tanners out as far as possible; they would gladly have shoved them all into the sea. How inveterate must have been the prejudice

against this occupation. To get an ancient Jew who had never eaten anything unclean to lodge with a Tanner was a miracle of miracles, the supreme conquest of Jesus Christ.

Now let us read our text: Simon Peter, a Jew of the Jews, who even if hungry would not touch anything unclean, who even in a dream would not arise and eat because the things in the descending sheet seemed to be unclean—he lodgeth with one Simon a Tanner! Everything that Christianity ever did is in that statement. Let that fact stand alone for a moment.

You may be familiar with a picture that is drawn very graphically by a celebrated artist: He calls our attention to a banquet: A Roman banquet. The word Roman multiplies the banquet. A banquet that is Roman is twice a banquet. The hall is lofty, barbaric in splendor; the tables are groaning beneath their wealth of luxuries. The artist bids us look at the central personages around the board. What heads they have. What eyes. Into what attitudes indicative of strength and dignity they throw themselves. Every look a picture, every tone a language. Behold the gorgeous banquet!

Then the artist asks us to notice these lithe, silent footed figures that are gliding rather than walking through the corridors of the banqueting hall. He tells us that they are slaves. You cannot

hear their steps. If they should happen to drop one of these crystal vases that they are carrying their owners would throw them into the horse-pond to-night, and not a soul in Rome would ask "what has become of that life". It is only a slave; cast him into the pond; a splash, a gasp, a gurgle, and the slave is gone.

Here is another room in the same old Roman house. It is a small room, it is upstairs; take heed how you ascend. There are a few people in the room. Surely we have seen some of these faces before. Who is that sitting near the haughty looking Patrician whom we saw in the banqueting hall? That looks like one of those lithe, silent-footed men whom we saw waiting upon the dignified Romans whilst they ate and drank at the feast. See, the Lord hands the viands to the despised slave, the slave partakes thereof, and hands them on to another Patrician. What is this? This is the Supper of The Lord. What wrought this miracle? Philosophy? A nicely calculated morality? Did some Seneca or Epictetus of the period work out a table of manners that issued in this? No. This is the triumph of the Cross. Only Calvary could have constituted such an assembly. "He lodgeth in the house of one Simon a tanner by the sea-side."

Here, then, and this is the point that I would make in this ordination service, you have the secret of social revolution: Here you have the only in-

strument that can work effectually for the reconciliation of classes, nationalities, and institutions. This gives us Christianity under the guise of a great Social Reformer. It testifies to the anarchiac dynamic of the Cross.

Do you think, my Brothers, that the Political Economists will ever reconcile existing differences, and smooth down the human heart into a state of placid contentment? Do you believe that man will ever be ruled from Columbus, or Washington, or from anywhere else; accepting the voice of authority, and settling down into harmonic relationships, because some great legislative voice has pronounced in this direction or in that? *Never.* What does the world want? Regeneration. What do men want who are separated, Tanner and Jew? They want an atmosphere. And the Spirit of the Lord is a breath, a wind, an afflatus, an inspiration; a Personality that rules often without words or expositions of a literal kind. The Spirit of the Lord is among men as a fire, solving, cleansing, purifying.

Christianity, then, should operate as a great Social Factor: The Rich Man need not be lectured upon his duty to the Poor. All that is needed is that the rich man should be converted, and he will instinctively see to the poor. Touch the man's heart, crucify him with Christ; introduce him into the mystery of the Divine Love as witnessed in the Incarnation, and he will require no Polemics.

My Brothers, we are working superficially, whatever philanthropic endeavors we may be engaged in, if we work without Christ. We are daubing the walls with untempered mortar. We are crying Peace, Peace, when there is no peace. We are the victims of compromises and concessions. We are in the thraldom of words and phrases. It is all valueless in the long run, and infinitely tiring and pathetic. "Marvel not that I say unto you that you must be born again"—not painted, artistically decorated, legislated into disciplinary regulations. Christ's men are born to Him, they have a household air, and a household dignity.

You see what I mean? I call upon you to be Ministers of Religion, not superintendents of charities and benevolences. As Ministers of Christ you will not be called upon to enter the Municipal, or State, or Federal arena; nor even to gloat your congregations with topical discourses upon sociological themes. That job is for others, experts in their several persuasions. Will you then be useless as Social Reformers and Propagandists? Surely not. Christ's ministers who are true to their profession are the men from whom will issue all social settlements. They are the men behind the Sociological Gun. There are those who say, "the Episcopal Pulpit should speak out more definitely upon Politics and Religion, upon Capital and Labor, upon Civic Betterment, and Charitable Reform". Not neces-

sarily so. The Pulpit will never let these things alone, it forever touches them by keeping its fingers off of them. It is not a question of manipulation, it is a question of regeneration. Make the tree good, and the fruit will look after itself; make the heart right, and the hand will be its willing slave. It is a platitude, but a fact, you cannot reform a man from without, you cannot legislate him into goodness, he must be somersaulted from within.

To believe this is, of course, to accept the charge of visionary. There are people who can only estimate the visible, the palpable, the concrete. They walk through the solar system with a two-inch rule in their hands. Such people may be most reputable. I would on no occasion hurt their feelings—if they have any. But such well-intentioned individuals will never straighten out the crookedness of the social fabric. A man says, "No church for me this evening. I am going to a meeting at the city hall for the purpose of considering the drainage of the town. I am a philanthropist before I am a Christian." So be it, my friend, drive away, drive away; get it done, get it done. It will accomplish a certain limited and definite amount of good. The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; and every main sewer properly constructed and honestly paid for is the Lord's. But when all is said and done, it is the heart that rules; it is the Spirit that determines history. The Christian minister is also

building, also purifying the town and neighborhood. His is the all-inclusive function. If men would only say *Amen* to their prayers, they would sweep every chimney, cleanse every drain, whitewash every sordid dwelling, and give every man space to live in.

I venture to assert, then, that the men who have the handling of the mysteries of life are the men who rule the destiny of the world. The Church, if true to herself, is in the fore-front and in the background of all social revolution and reformation. The Church says: "We know, for the Lord has put the secret into our hearts, we know what will heal, permanently heal, every wound, and reconcile every difference; the preaching of Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."

In the ordinary field of our regular ministry, in the preaching of the Word, in the administration of the sacraments, we have our legitimate part in the forcing of the world's progress. The man who thunders forth *"Do unto others as you would that others would do unto you"* minimizes all oppressions, lightens every burden, tempers all inequalities. Every syllable that the Blessed Jesus ever uttered contains in it the pledge of social evolution.

I would impress this fundamental truth upon you my brothers, who enter the ministry of the Church to-day. The spiritual is the *raison d'être*

of your vocation. Your work will be to bring the power of an endless life to bear upon the fleeting concerns of the dying moment. See to it that you are faithful to your privilege.

Never believe that you are the second man in the great process of social improvement; and never show that you are the first man in the sense that indicates invidiousness, ambition, or foolish self-assertion. Let your dignity be in your subject. Let your power be in your inspiration. Pray without ceasing. Be men of prayer. Then the house of Simon the Tanner will be situated in the centre of the town; and Simon and Peter shall lodge together in amicable relationship forever.

LIKE MASTER LIKE DISCIPLE. AN ORDINATION SERMON

St. John 16: 32. "I am not alone, because the Father is with me."

THE loneliest life ever lived in the world was the life of Jesus Christ. That loneliness issued from two apparent causes: His consecration, and His proclamation of the Truth.

(1) *His consecration:* Jesus had a mission. He came to earth for a purpose and He was forever conscious of that purpose. "I am come to do the will of Him that sent me." "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" "I am among you as one that serveth." That sense of consecration pervaded His entire ministry, as the sun pervades and constitutes the daylight. It was part and parcel with Himself.

See how it ministered to His loneliness: As a child at Nazareth He was misunderstood; He was a Boy unlike the boys about Him. There was an

aloofness about Him that bespoke an object nearer and dearer to His heart than the pertinent interests of the immediate moment. As a youth in the carpenter's shop He was a pattern of industry to His companions, but He worked silently and with an air of preoccupation that singled Him out as separate and estranged. This peculiarity of temperament was expressed to the full one day. He left His home and His occupation to tour the land of Palestine as a mendicant evangelist. It was a departure unheard of in the quiet village among the hills, and His relatives and friends set out to lay hands upon Him, for they said, "He is beside Himself, He is mad."

Then in the world at large, surrounded at first by multitudes and latterly by twelve selected men, He was a man apart; no one thoroughly understood His message. He was an enigma even to His disciples, one of whom betrayed Him, one of whom denied Him, and all of whom, in the hour of calamity, forsook Him and fled. Surely a loneliness of soul, an isolation of spirit was His, such a loneliness and such an isolation as only a consciousness of mission could bestow.

(2) *He was lonely because of His proclamation of the truth:* He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." It was said of Him by others, "He spake with authority, and not as the scribes."

Truth is never popular. It runs counter to the

license of mankind. But the truth as preached by Jesus was directly antagonistic to the conception of the age in which it was announced. It was inconceivable that the long-promised Messiah should appear in the tattered garments of a despised humility; a simpering Evangelist who gave as His text, "Forgive your enemies." "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's." So the record of the ministry of Jesus is a record of false witness and persecution ending in a felon's death. And, O, the abyssmal loneliness of it all. To have one's sincerest utterances exposed to a hostile criticism, and weighed in the scales of a purblind ecclesiasticism.

In His sense of mission, then, and in His proclamation of the truth, the life of Jesus was a life of superlative loneliness.

But the compensation for this consciousness of isolation was found by the Master in the realized and abiding companionship of the Father: "I am not alone, for the Father is with Me." The word Father was ever upon the Saviour's lips. We hear it at the very outset of His life as a mere child: "My Father's business." We hear it in every sermon He preached, and in every prayer he uttered. We hear it at the close of His career, "Father into Thy hands I commend My spirit." He found the Father nearer than breathing, closer than hands and feet.

Now, my brothers who become priests to-day, all this in its fullest significance applies to you:

(1) *Consecration:* You are here this morning to be set apart from your fellows for the work of the priesthood, to be endowed with power from on high for the ministry of souls. Before men and before God, from to-day henceforth and forever, you are to stand as messengers, watchmen, and stewards of the King of Kings.

The loneliness of Jesus will be your ministerial heritage, and you will experience it in exact ratio to your fidelity. A minister's life is a lonely life, the loneliest of all lives lived upon this hospitable earth. Let there be no misunderstanding about that in your minds from the outset.

From the point of view of the world this is true. The priest is a man with a mission, he is differentiated from his fellows. No amount of subterfuge may permit the same behavior after ordination as before. If the individual advocates it, the world condemns it, and that condemnation spells the validity of the demarcation. For the priest there may be no compromise between God and mammon. Harmful pleasures and many innocent enjoyments are forbidden for necessity's or expediency's sake. Friendship changes its character, conversation alters its tone. The world will meet you with a cold reserve, or with a forced gaiety, as forced as it is unnatural. Society will accept you as a

necessary adjunct to its conventionalities, a portion of it expecting to be gratified by your operations on the Sabbath Day; granting you admission into its homes when death is imminent, and looking for your specified performance at a wedding or a funeral ceremony, but barring you out of the inner sanctum of its unrestrained merriment. Men will curb their naturalistic outbursts when you are near, and vote your absence in the ordinary occasions of life as more satisfactory than your proximity. You must look forward to being used and criticized unmercifully, not enjoyed, to being regarded as a sombre necessity, not as a delectable luxury. You will always be the minister and the satisfied world will ever continue to assume with every appearance of self-complacency its unministerial attitudes. Your very garb is symptomatic of the non-assimilative tendencies of your profession.

Moreover: your days and nights are dedicated. If you are loyal to the enthusiasm that should actuate a prophet your time will be utilized to the fullest extent and beyond the bounds of elastic enlargement. The priest is never off duty, his work is never done. There is no eight-hour day for him, and contrary to general belief, Sunday is his holiday. By the very necessity of the case then, you are prevented from entering the phantasmagoria of an average life. Because you are a man with a mission, from the world's side and from

your own side, a loneliness of spirit is demanded unparalleled in any other walk of life. You are consecrated and therefore perforce you are separated.

(2) *Truth:* You are about to undertake solemn vows to proclaim the truth as contained in the Catholic creeds. If you ever find that you cannot preach those truths in their entirety then as an honest man secede from the Church which has enough to do to fight the world without apart from contending with sophistry within, to convert sinners apart from harboring disloyal sons. Your proclamation of the truth will gain you many enemies, and win for you a conceited unpopularity. This is peculiarly true at the present time and in the United States of America. There is a nebulous charity abroad amongst men to-day, a liberalism which is based not upon intelligent conviction but upon a good-natured indifference. It holds its head high in virtuous broad-mindedness, but in reality it is the child of ignorance or sin. Your attempt in your locality to give the lie to this specious hypocrisy may result in the crucifixion of yourself.

To preach Jesus Christ as the Son of God, as the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, as born of a virgin, as raised from the dead; to preach the Protestant Episcopal Church as a true branch of the Church Catholic; that is a strong and old-fash-

ioned text for the twentieth century, and it takes a courageous man to preach it. It means the opposition of Unitarianism, Latitudinarianism, Christian Science, New Thought, the New Theology, Agnosticism, Nothingism, and above all Indifferentism. Such opposition you will assuredly meet with if you preach the Truth as the Church sees it and nothing but the truth. You must be prepared to be a fool for Christ's sake, and to have men look at you as though your intellect were deranged.

But face this loneliness, and unpopularity, my brothers, with brave hearts, for you are about your Father's business and your Father is with you.

In this, as it was with Jesus, you will find your all-sufficient consolation. Your relation to God is a personal relation. You are not tying your young minds to a body of doctrine, but you are placing your hand in the hand of a personal friend, and you will come to know the friend better as the years go on. God will be ever with you in sorrow and in joy, in darkness and in light; you will be His special care, and in Him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

May I assure you from my own limited experience that He will manifest Himself to you as to few others in the world of men, that he has prepared for you (in the inner circle of His friendship) such good things as pass the average man's understanding.

You will never be alone, for the Father will ever be consciously present with you. Only life may be the commentary upon this assurance. You will know Him, you will hear Him, you will feel Him. He will bear you up that you strike not your foot against a stone. Lonely? Yes, from the secular standpoint, too lonely at times for utterance, but "These words have I spoken unto you that your joy may be full." "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN

St. Luke 23: 34. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

THESE words are interwoven with the Story of Calvary. They are so familiar that with many of us they have ceased to exert their momentous appeal. There is an old proverb—"familiarity breeds contempt." I am not so sure that contempt is the prevailing attitude. Rather—"familiarity breeds benumbment," repetition makes us numb. The issue of familiarity is the insensibility of the commonplace.

Let us get away from the bondage of custom, and see the picture of Calvary not merely as though we had never seen it before but as though we were actually present at the incident ourselves. Let us feel that we are jostled and pushed by the hurrying crowd. Let us hear the laughter. The laughter! that is worth thinking about; the roaring, and the shouting, and the self-complacent ribaldry of those who find in this scene of agony the triumphant issue, the satisfaction of perfidious scheming. Let

us see the pale faces of the women, with tears as rivulets streaming from their eyes; and the terrified faces of the little children.

I want to see that Green Hill far away; as it was, and as it forever is, and to look at the central figure upon the cross, with the malefactors on either side. I want to see it all not as a spectator, but as a participator. I want to exert the will, the focussing power behind the imagination, and to be really present at the crucifixion of the Son of God.

Over the attendant multitude, and through the surging conflict of tumultuous revelry, conveyed as by a spell of the Divine, are heard the words, the most gracious and pitying words of history, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

"They know not what they do." That is the acme of intercession; that is the climax of special pleading; the universal palliative of justice, applicable to sinners of every age. We sin. Why? In the final analysis because we know not what we do. The plea is a plea of ignorance, and as such it holds good for all time. How many things we have done, which if we had known all that they signified we should never have attempted. We see the act, but not the consequences. We perform because of shallow thought. We behold the embarkation, but not the journey. We see the road in front, but not the bypaths, the collateral issues. Or, we see

the inner circle, but not the widening and ever widening circles that touch the farther shore. In truth, we know not what we do.

"Father." The fatherhood of God. What is it? What does it mean? Is it a mere counter, devoid of moment and intent? Do we understand anything when we say, "Our Father," "God is my Father?" Is there any influence exerted over our life and actions? It was the revelation of Jesus. He came to tell us how to approach God in the love that casteth out fear, and this He did in the words, "When ye pray say Our Father." Father —how may we fill the term with heart's blood, and make it burn and live?

When we were young, "Father" had a certain significance. We knew what it was to call out Father, and expect and receive an answer. Well, take all the best and all the noblest and all the tenderest of the earthly Father; take all that as a basis, and expand it infinitely, and arrive at a conception, meagre, it is true, but so far just, of the Heavenly Father.

There is a spectroscope which by recent experimentation has shown that not merely the sun and the moon, but the remotest and minutest stars have in them elements of this earth on which our lot is cast. There is an intimacy, and more, a relationship between our planets, and all the constellations which surcharge the atmosphere. We

may reason from the one to all the others. We are one in that the elements of the earth are found to be the elements of the sun and moon and stars. So, in earthly fatherhood there are elements which are to be found in the Heavenly Fatherhood. We may bridge the gulf between the human and the divine, between the finite and the infinite, because the lesser is contained within the greater.

"Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." *Our ignorance, then, is directed against our Heavenly Father.* We have sinned against Him. But *how?* Is such a thing possible? It is, in that the love of God the Father, the providing care of God the Father, the hope of God the Father for us, is the love, the providing care, and the ambition of our earthly Father in ratio magnified. Let us look at the matter humanly: Your son treats you as though you were dead. How would you like it? When he has difficulties he spreads them broadcast between his friends and acquaintances, but never comes to you for counsel. How would you like it? When he achieves success, he enjoys it apart from you; and, when he fails, he seeks reimbursement and recreation apart from your assistance. How would you like it? He walks the mountain tops of joy, and leaves you in the valley beneath; and he refuses to permit you to be when he sins, a partner in his shame. How would you like it? And does not God the Father

care? He is not a stone. He is not an immovable, insensate sphinx. He is not a block of impenetrable marble, devoid of sense and feeling. He has a Father's heart, and craves the companionship of His children. He has sight to give, and longs to bestow it. He has hearing to vouchsafe, hearing susceptible of the interpretation of heavenly voices, and yearns to bequeath it. He has forgiveness for your sin, quality for your success, advice for your perplexity, comfort profound and commensurate for your suffering, and asks to satisfy your deficiencies with such plenitude of consolation. Indeed, and in truth, when we sin, we know not what we do. Why, if we acted towards our earthly father as we act towards our Heavenly Father we would bring his gray hairs in sorrow to the grave. This is one of the widening circles of the consequence of sin outside our sight; the effect of transgression upon Our Father who is in Heaven. O Blessed Christ, the Ever Existent Intercessor, intercede for us before the Father Thine age-long plea, "They know not what they do."

(2) *Another circle of the consequences of our sins is aimed against our brethren:* There is no such thing as individual sin; all sin is social sin. The individual is not an integer, he is a fraction. Each man is a fragment of society. Every sin committed by the one is bound to affect the many. Whatever the privacy of sin, you cannot lock sin

up. It is impossible to shut the door of the room of our sin, and turn the key, and leave the transgression there. Your secret sin as well as your public sin mars the social fabric. We are limbs, not bodies. We are organs, not organisms. The condition of the limb affects the body, and the health of the organ affects the organism. You may not commit a sin, wrap it up, conceal it as you will without that sin tarnishing your brethren. Scott, the Antarctic hero, said that he had to give more attention to the selection of the men who were to compose his expedition than to the equipment itself, because one queer man engendering mutiny might destroy the entire venture. And, if this is true in the less, why not in the greater? What matter whether poison be dropped into a gill or into a gallon of water, the analysist will detect it in either, in every drop of its contents. In New York the civic authorities forbid the consumption of soft coal, but if one were temporarily to break the law and let his chimney pour forth beclouding smoke, to that degree and extent the atmosphere of the metropolis would be polluted.

There is an atmosphere in the home. One impure child will defile that atmosphere. There is an atmosphere in the club; one vicious man will affect it for evil; so much so that his fellow-members will wish him out of the club. There is an atmosphere in the parish. God alone knows how

my sins influence you, and how your sins influence me. There is an atmosphere in the community, and in the nation, and our sins will touch for harm the community and the state. The effluvia from one drain breeds pestilence. Have we thought of these things? No; at least we are ignorant of the uttermost consequences. "Father, so far as our sins against our brethren are concerned, forgive us for we know not what we do."

Finally: the widening circle of the consequences of our sins affect not only God, not only our brethren, but also ourselves; I cannot sin and not be the worse for that sin. That is a rule that admits of no exceptions. The trouble is—that the last place in which our sins are placarded is in the flesh. Do we appreciate that? The last place in which our sins are advertised is in the body. If every time we sinned, we lost some physical beauty, if every time we sinned, we manifested some physical deformity; if every time we sinned, the sin were tattooed upon our flesh—how careful we should be not to sin. If we could see our sins at work as a wrecker demolishing a house, first the walls, then the roof, then the foundation, we would be obsessed with terror at the very appearance of evil. But such is not the case. A man drinks, drinks, drinks, before the results of sin are physically apparent. A man lusts for many a long day before we see the telltale story, as we often do, upon

his evil face, his shrunken form, and his vacillating limbs. This is true not only of the baser passions, but of the dainty sins dressed in gauzy draperies which masquerade as virtues. Only after long time are they evidenced in paucity of soul so pronounced that he who runs may read the imprimatur upon the flesh. The first result of sin is aimed against the spiritual treasure; it bombards the gates of the Holy Place, and takes captive the sanctities therein. Just as, to take a homely illustration, if one room of your house is overheated and you shut the door, the effect is not conspicuous in the roof and walls of the house, but the mischief is wrought within the house and room itself; perhaps a delicate musical instrument is irreparably destroyed, or your beautiful draperies are tarnished, or your tender plants are killed. This is the insidiousness of sin, the fact that the soul may be lost before the flesh is traced with lines of disfigurement. "Gray hairs are here and there upon us and we know it not." We commit suicide, temporal and eternal, and we know not what we do. O, forgive us, Heavenly Father; we know not what we do.

These, then, are the widening circles of the consequences of our sins aimed against our God, our brethren, and ourselves. Wherein lies our redemption? Think; think in God. To think in God is to hold communion with God, and to hold communion with God is prayer. To think in God

is to have our eyes anointed with eyesalve that we may see.

To see in God is to see the whole road; sideways as well as straight ahead; to behold the collateral issues as well as the objective. It is to be no longer ignorant, but filled with knowledge. An upward glance—God. A rounded glance—our brethren. An inward glance — ourselves. Lord, open our eyes that we may see!

FIRST THINGS FIRST

St. Matt. 6: 33. "Seek ye first."

IN speaking of the necessity of placing First Things First there is a statement of Jesus Christ in the Sermon on the Mount which instinctively comes to mind: "But seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." You remember the "but" is conjunctive to what has passed before. Our Lord has been decrying the wrong emphasis of life. "Lay not up treasures upon the earth," "Be not anxious what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink." He points out where the true emphasis is to be placed. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these secondary things shall be added unto you." His moral was this: You are prone to glorify the subordinate, and demean the essential—*put First Things First.* This counsel, as all the counsel of Jesus, partakes of the Speaker's Immortality. The progress of history has but proved its applicability to a per-

petuated fallacy of mankind. The muddle of humanity in the past; its turmoil in the present; and its prospective swithering in the future, is rooted in an inherent defect of perspective, in a seemingly constitutional inability to magnify the great, and minimize the little. Time and eternity, God and mammon, treasure upon earth and treasure in heaven, these, in all their ramifications, are the abiding selectives, and in accordance with our allegiance so is the intrinsic success or failure of life.

Our subject, then, is First Things First: It is interesting to look at some historical personages, and to see what they considered to be of preëminent importance in their lives.

Here is Martin Luther: The record of his life is known to all. Two ways were set before him; the easy way—the way of prestige, the way that led to Rome; and, the difficult way—the way of persecution, the road that led to Geneva; and he chose the difficult way, saying: "Here stand I, I can do no other; so help me God." Enthroned above all else in his troubled life sat kingly conscience.

Here is Nathaniel Heywood: He was one of the two thousand clergymen in Charles the Second's reign who gave up their livings at the categorical imperative of the inner voice. His parishioners were grieved to lose him; they gathered

around him, and urged him to remain; they said: "Oh, Mr. Heywood, many a man in these days makes a great gash in his conscience, could you not make just a little nick in yours?" But the brave man, uncompromising in his sense of duty, refused to make so much as a scratch. He placed, in the sense of Christ, first things first.

Here is General Wolfe upon the Plains of Abraham: The story is familiar to every Canadian school boy; it may be more or less familiar to the children of America. Wolfe was wounded, lying upon the ground, with his head reclining upon the knee of an officer who supported him. Around him was the din of battle, the smoke of carnage. Suddenly some one close at hand ejaculated, "They run." "Who run?" whispered General Wolfe. "The French," came the answer. Then Wolfe ordered, "Tell so and so to march his men to the mouth of the St. Charles to cut off their retreat." After which came the sigh of triumph, "I die happy." General Wolfe had set his heart upon the capture of Quebec, he had fought against recurrent fever which vitiated his physical health all through the long winter siege, and his ambition achieved he died happy. His first thing first was Quebec at all costs.

Here is Wellington at Waterloo: It was an anxious hour in the midst of the battle. The French were pressing hard. The English were

beginning to waver. Wellington sent a command to the colonel of a certain regiment to go into action. The colonel refused; his men, he said, were too lightly armed to manipulate that particular move. The answer was brought to the general, and his reply in stentorian tones, and with blazing eye, was "tell him to march his men off the field." Even at that moment, when the issue of the day was hanging in the balance, the first thing in the life of a soldier was obedience, and the great Wellington found time to express the command, "tell that insubordinate officer to march his men off the field."

Here is Phillips Brooks, a warrior of peace: After leaving Harvard he set out to be a school teacher. He served in the Boston Latin School, and placed before him the ideal of instructing the young in the rudiments of knowledge. He proved himself to be, in this association, an unqualified failure. He could maintain no semblance of order and discipline among his scholars, big man that he was physically. The class room was pandemonium. The experience cast him into the depths of despair; but, it was the minister of God to him for good. He had placed first in his life that which, under a different setting, ranked second. His thoughts were drawn to the Church. He went to Virginia, and prepared for the ministry. In one year after his ordination his name was known

throughout the ecclesiastical world of the United States, and, as rector of the Church of the Advent, Philadelphia, he received calls from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

From this time onward he had but one ambition—to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. All his studies were bent in that direction, and even the simplest experiences of every day life were mainly important in so far as they catered to homiletic theme and illustration. For thirty-five years he prepared, and his preparation was most laborious and systematic, on an average two sermons every week, and he became the Robertson of America, the greatest preacher of his day and generation. His first thing, to which he subordinated all else, even the institutional life of his several parishes, was to preach. With St. Paul he could say, "This *one* thing I do."

So much, then, with regard to some of the great outstanding figures of the past—Luther, Heywood, Wolfe, Wellington, and Phillips Brooks. Luther and Heywood predominated conscience; Wolfe, the capture of Quebec; Wellington, obedience; and Phillips Brooks the presentation of the truth as adapted to the assimilation of men and women.

How is it to-day? What is the up-to-date commentary upon the words, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness?" Is it not

true, with all our boasted civilization, with all our proclaimed emancipation from the mistakes of remote and approximate antiquity, that the miserableness of humanity is due to neither more nor less than this—the fact that the majority of men and women do not seek first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness, do not, as a matter of fact, place first things first? People are not getting the best out of life; they are not unearthing the hidden riches; they are not making the most of the illimitable resources of personality. They are striving for the second rate, under the misapprehension that the second rate is the first rate, and they are resting in the discontent of the subsidiary when they should be revelling in the ecstasy of the primary. People are laying up treasures upon the earth; people are anxious about food and raiment; people are endeavoring to maintain a compromise between God and mammon; people are overwhelmingly perplexed about the things of to-morrow; and, so, they have forgotten, or they are in a fair way to forget, the clarion importunity of the Kingdom of God.

We must remember, of course, and we are persistently reminded of the fact to-day, that life is many sided; that life has many phases. Man is a religious animal, but the animal means that he is not all soul. There is the physical, the mental, the social, as well as the spiritual constituent of per-

sonality. It is claimed that the Church, through her ministers, forgets this complexity of man, and that she would transform the week into one prolonged Sabbath. I deny this allegation. This is the age, whether we are appreciative of the fact or no, of institutionalized Christianity. The whole man, muscle, brain, heart, and soul, is being appealed to. The house influences the synagogue about as much as the synagogue influences the house. But, whether the Church is or is not blind to the myriad sidedness of life, Jesus Christ was not. Not alone by His preaching, but also by His living, He showed the profuse and the diffuse richness of existence, and the legitimacy of the flesh as well as the legitimacy of the spirit. He did not deny the right of the minor things, and absorb them in the exclusive pursuit of the major. He simply asserted that the minor things are minor things, and the true proportion of life is to be achieved by placing first things first. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." "All these things" would not be added if they were wrong. The whole difficulty is the difficulty of false emphasis.

Let us see it in the world around us to-day: There is over-emphasized athleticism. It has been said that if the sporting columns were eliminated from our daily papers many of our young men

would soon forget how to read! There is truth and humor in equal doses in this assertion. The Germans say that they like sport, but dislike games. It is a neat distinction, but there is a well-defined difference. Shooting is sport; fishing is sport; but, baseball and track athletics come under the caption of games. We are on this continent of America game mad. To run is not the end of life; to catch a ball is not the *sine qua non* of existence! Let us have sport, let us have games, by all means let us have both, but let us withal pay homage to common sense. We must have sound minds in sound bodies, but athleticism is only important in so far as being, in moderation, conducive to health it fits a man for the work of life. There are those who in effect parody the words of Christ, "Seek ye first muscle, nimbleness of limb, soundness of wind, and let the Kingdom of God look after itself."

There is over-emphasized scholasticism: The mind is an important part of our composition, but it is not by any means the most important part. The scholar may be, and, as a matter of experience, frequently is, a fool, and it is infinitely better to possess a loving heart than it is to be the owner of a well-stored brain. But, how many students owe allegiance to the fallacy that the goal of life is to excel as a student. I knew many such at the university. They over applied themselves at their studies, they attended lectures with the assiduity

of a leech absorbing the life blood of its victim, they whispered in epigram, and spoke in grandiloquent bombast, they stayed up late of nights, and burned the midnight oil to streak of dawn. The triumphant result was that some of them passed record examinations, and were spoken of by delighted professors as "coming men." Where are they all to-day? I am watching for their "coming"! Some few have done well; some have died from the effects of over-taxed constitutions (I could tell you one or two pathetic stories under that heading); some are the most uninteresting and devitalized mortals with whom it has ever been my misfortune to meet, and most of them have ceased to be "coming men", and have buried their prophetic glory within the walls of their revered alma mater. The world cannot get along without scholarship, that is granted, but, it is well to realize the other side of the matter, for there is another side, and to appreciate that in the assimilation of knowledge as in all else there is the happy medium. "Seek ye first learning; it is the one thing needful; and leave character and understanding to the unfoldment of opportunity." This is not only wrong, but short sighted folly.

There is the over-emphasis of wealth: It is a threadbare platitude to-day to assert that this is "a materialistic age." I believe that to be but a half truth. This is a materialistic age, and it is not

a materialistic age. This age has all the charm of antithesis, or rather, antitheses, and all the fascination of contrast. It is this, and it is that, and it is the other thing, all in one. It is hard to deny, however, that with many the standard of life's judgments is based upon wealth, and with many the one thing worth seeking is money. Money, money, money—it is not only in our hands, and in our pockets (where it does not stay for any appreciable length of time), but it is in the air. The sun is an emblazoned gold piece, the moon is a silver dollar, and the very stars of heaven above us are coins of currency of diminishing denominations. These are those who can think of nothing else save *Money*: there are those who speak of nothing else save *Money;* and there are those who degenerate life into one colossal pursuit for *Money.* It is so horribly vulgar on the lowest grounds, and it is so pitifully pathetic on the highest grounds. Were we not so commercially absorbed in this new country we should realize this money getting, this money grabbing, this money grubbing, and this money spending to be the most ludicrous and humiliating parody of life ever perpetrated upon humanity by the author of all iniquity. Who is intrinsically the better for money, and who is intrinsically the worse for the want of money? Come, let us reason together, and season our reasoning with a slight modicum of

humor. Whose wisdom is accentuated by the possession of money, and whose foolishness is alleviated by its accumulation? Are you more of a man than I am because you have twenty-five thousand dollars a year, and am I considerably less of a man because I have only a fraction of that amount? Why, I have met numskull millionaires, and Aristotelian paupers, and *vice versa.*

A friend of mine returned from western Canada last summer, and said: "I have been through Manitoba and Saskatchewan. The wheat is wonderful, the flowing, glowing fields rippling in the summer wind, are golden to the harvest. The wealth of a nation trembles in the balance. The next ten days will decide whether or no the crop of 1916 is a record crop." Good God—yes, good God, the situation demands strong expression—what has the wheat crop to do with the innate worth of the citizens of Canada? "The Kingdom of God, and His righteousness" is the backbone, the spinal column of a nation, and, if this is intact, and recognized, and lived, why, then, harvests may come and go in their plenty or in their paucity, and the nation stands four square to all the winds that blow.

What does it mean to place money first among the objects of our life's ambition? I will tell you a true story of what it meant to one man. He was born of lowly parentage, on a farm. As a boy he was methodical in all his ways, and more acquisi-

tive than his fellows with regard to the pennies that fell to his portion. He was a plodder, and, as he grew older determined that come what might he would make money before he died. At the age of twenty he bought a small farm; to this in ten years' time he added two larger farms. Then an opportunity for advantageous sale presenting itself he sold all that he possessed for large profit, and started in business for himself in a neighboring town. There he prospered abundantly, but, the day came when, under the advice of a leading citizen of his community, he placed all his savings in a propitious undertaking. The undertaking went to pieces; the man from comparative affluence was reduced to straitened circumstances. Imagine his feelings; the bottom had literally fallen out of his life; he had nothing left to live for. He had devoted himself body and soul to the acquisition of money; toward the accomplishment of that end he had sacrificed all else; and when his money was carried away all his interest in living went with it. His First Thing First foundered, and he was a hopeless derelict, drifting uselessly upon the waters of existence. Finding it no longer possible to bear the burden of emptiness, the man placed a pistol to his head, and blew his money-saturated brains out. "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain that we can carry nothing out," and neither bank deposits, nor stocks, nor reliable

mortgages, nor hard cash, will give a man peace at the last. That is a woeful platitude, is it not, and yet like so many platitudes it is uncomfortably true!

No; neither athleticism, nor wealth, nor scholastic attainments, are worthy of preëminent emphasis. As paramount objects of desire they prove to be but empty satisfactions. It behooves us, then, does it not, to look within; to importune our inner consciousness with this imperative interrogation, "What is the thing that I am placing first in my life; what is it that holds the premier position, around which all my interests are centered?" and, then, through honest analysis to reach this conclusion, "I must seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness."

What is the Kingdom of God and His righteousness? It is difficult to define; but, we learn how to seek it from a study of the life of Jesus Christ. He was conscious of the all compelling motive of life from the beginning. He sensed it when at the age of twelve He said, "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" It was the same thing later on when He said, "I am come not to do mine own will but the will of Him that sent Me." It was the same thing later still when He said, "We go up to Jerusalem," when He set His face steadfastly toward a mighty consummation. It was the same thing in the garden when He cried, "Not

My will, but Thine be done." Then finally He was aware of its fulfilment when upon the cross He cried in paean of victory, "It is finished." Now, what for Jesus was, and so what for us is, the Kingdom of God and His righteousness? Surely this, whatever else beside, *attention to the needs of others.* Jesus was forever taking a personal interest in people. He was never too occupied to comfort the individual in sorrow; to advise him in perplexity; to deal in ameliorative consolation for the sinner; to care for the sick, and, on occasion, to raise the dead. He was concentrated upon the wholesale redemption of humanity, but He ever had time to attend to the individual by the roadside. To save the world, and, to save men, that was for Jesus Christ, whatever else beside, the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness.

Should not this be the superlative motive of our lives? Brotherliness; fraternal interest; selfless absorption in the needs of the necessitous; that is the Kingdom of God; that is the pursuance of His righteousness; and that is the secret of a life, be it delicate, or ignorant, or poor, which is rich with the richness of advancing time, and with the treasures of an ever accumulating eternity.

The field for operation is as large as opportunity, and the opportunity is limited by life itself. There is the home, the office, the shop, the factory, the street, and there is society, and, above

all else, there is the Church. "Whilst we have time let us do good unto all men, *but especially* unto them that are of the Household of Faith."

Yes; in seeking the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness, we are to take Jesus as the guide of our lives. He is to be our pattern and example in this mighty business of putting *first things first.* We may not literally follow in His footsteps, but we must assimilate His Spirit.

On all the big ocean liners they have two compasses. One is on the captain's bridge, near the center of navigating activity. Here stands the helmsman, and the officer upon duty, and here, from time to time, gather the responsible men to make their observations, and to regulate the course of the ship. The other compass is upon the mast, near the crow's nest, where the life of the vessel never penetrates, and where all deflecting influences are far removed. This is the infallible compass. In times of emergency, when doubt as to position has arisen, or when danger is presumably near at hand, someone is sent aloft to read this second compass, and by its readings the other compass is fortified or disproved in its conclusions.

Circumstances demand that we should be our own compass bearers. In the exigencies of daily life we have to be our own court of appeal. But, amid the turmoil of existence, and, above all, in the crises of our days we are not sufficient unto

ourselves. Our wills are governed, and our consciences deflected, by the importunities of things around us. Then, if, with undeviating course, we would seek the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness, we must have reference to our Infallible Guide; conscience, illuminated by the Standard of the Life of Jesus Christ. Only so may we place *first things first.*

JUDAS ISCARIOT

St. John 12: 5. "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?"

THESE are, upon the face of them, fair and pleasing words. They are the words of a philanthropist, and a benefactor; of a preacher, and a humanitarian. They arouse our admiration, and applause. But, alas—the voice is the voice of Judas, and we have been led to think hard things about Judas. Let us, then, give to Judas to-day the conventional interpretation; let us paint him in the colors, the orthodox colors, in which he has been portrayed for centuries.

"Why was not the ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?" A specious utterance, but the apostles appraised it for what it was worth. In the next verse we read St. John's commentary upon the episode: "this he said not because he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and carried the bag." Judas was becoming conscious of his own motives, and so was surprised

into saying more than he meant. He is aware that his motives are becoming apparent to his brother disciples, and so he speaks magnanimously in order to throw dust in their eyes.

The position of Judas is incongruous. He is altogether out of his element. The simple minded apostles are arrant fools in his worldly estimation. Their childlike devotion to Jesus is getting upon his nerves. There is too much heavenliness about an earthly proposition to suit his taste. Too much emotionalistic sentimentality, and too little practical common sense. The others are content to listen to the Master's words, and to bask in the sunshine of His dreamy presence, and to seek nothing tangible for their services. Not so with Judas. He is too much a man of business to be satisfied with unremunerative visions. The present opportunity is real, and must be grasped. The unknown future may take care of itself. He has his dreams, but they are dreams of material greatness, and of visible results. He has determined to make the most of his position as treasurer, and he will at a future and convenient season force the hand of Jesus, and compel Him to ascend the Throne of Israel.

As the disciples grow better, and increase in godliness, he grows worse and increases in evil. For the present, however, he must keep up appearances, and maintain his attitude of the self-less

enthusiast. This act of a shortsighted woman is most trying on his patience. It is such a waste of good money; money that might have found its way into his pocket; but at all costs he must lead the bystanders to imagine that his thoughts are focussed upon the well-being of the poor. "All this," he cries in seemingly righteous indignation, "might have been sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor". A wretched man Judas; verily an impossible person; full worthy of the opprobrium that has ever been heaped upon his devoted head.

Now, what is the application? The post of treasurer, or secretary of any club, or organization is an honorable one. It is a position of trust imposed upon a man through the confidence of his fellow-men. It is the last office in the world, however, for any man to seek who has a tendency toward dishonesty. We should study our own proclivities; we should come through introspective study to know ourselves; and so avoid the possibility of moral disaster. It is an unwise thing for a man who cannot swim to throw himself into the sea if he desires to live. The man with tendencies toward insobriety should never serve behind a bar! and yet, how many men ruthlessly put themselves in the way of temptation. I have known youths who were susceptible to the influence of sex embrace the ministry as a profession. The one profession

of all professions where the sensualist may, if he will, come into his damnatory own! Judas should have known his weaknesses better than to have consented to act as treasurer when the suffrages of the Twelve singled him out for such a post.

Then again: anyone who is connected with the financial side of Church life knows how desperately hard it is to get the major number of people in a congregation to take a monetary interest in foreign missions. So many people say, and they say it with a seraphic smile, and with a look of wisdom that would make a philosopher blush with envy, "the money might be better spent upon the heathen at home." This they say not because they really care one iota for the heathen at home; not because they would willingly dedicate an evening to the conversion of a skeptic in the neighboring block; but merely because calling themselves Christians they seek to evade a Christian's paramount obligation! The money that might have been given for the furtherance of Christ's kingdom in Zululand never gladdens a home in the city of Cleveland. It is spent, as was ever intended, upon self! I know a bishop who is obsessed with the idea that he is the instrument under God to create a Cathedral for his diocese. To this end his labors have been almost exclusively directed. But do you suppose that his influential laity sympathize with him in his ambition—sympathize with him

to the point of munificent donations? Not for a moment. "The money that you want for a Cathedral", they say, "should be collected as a fund for the improvement of the salaries of your underpaid clergy." Has such a fund been instituted? Yes. But little if any money has been, or is ever likely to be, collected. The influential laity talk this way not because they care for the impecunious parsons; but simply because they have their money, and they want to keep it!

So, often you hear people deprecating the advisability, and even the morality, of giving money for the beautifying of the House of God. "Why is not the money spent upon hospitals, and playgrounds, and for the furtherance of the work of the Associated Charities," they say. But this they say not because they self-sacrificingly care for hospitals, or playgrounds, or the Associated Charities; but because money given in gratitude to Almighty God for blessings received seems to their commercialized minds to be money wasted.

O, the selfish, grudging spirit that entrenches itself behind high sounding phraseology and lofty sentiments which cost nothing beyond the breath that gives them life—beware of it, my friends. It is the hall mark of the modern, present day, Judas Iscariot. There is such a thing as serving God; and there is such a thing as satisfying the insatiable ego.

Finally: Anyone who has been the recipient of heartbroken confessions realizes that the worst experience known to the individual is to have a sin between oneself and God—a sin unknown to relatives, and associates, and friends. To live in a pure home, and to be oneself secretly impure. To be treated as an equal and a Christian; and yet to be utterly unworthy of confidence. To be respected by one's employers in business, and yet to be guilty of peculation on the sly. All this is to be encompassed with the very pains of hell. Who may fathom the feelings of Judas in his saner moments—with the dark sin of dishonesty upon his conscience, and surrounded by the transparent integrity of his fellow-disciples? Let us walk the straight and narrow path; for verily such procedure not only gives a man peace at the last, but peace all the time.

Judas, then, still lives. He is not merely a figure of ancient history. Judas still lives—Judas with his easily spoken plausibilities; with his covetous heart; and with his hidden iniquity. Let us see to it that Judas does not live in us.

STEWARDSHIP

I Cor. 4: 2. "It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful."

IN his old age Daniel Webster was asked by a friend, "What is the greatest thought that has ever crossed your mind?" Webster sat in silence for a space, knit his brows together in meditation, and then looking up into the face of his interrogator, made reply, "In my whole lifetime the greatest thought that has ever crossed my mind is this: 'the thought of my individual responsibility to God'."

Our Individual Responsibility to God. The Bible is full of it; it runs as a golden thread from Genesis to Revelation.

In the Old Testament, at the very beginning, *we have the story of the Garden of Eden.* Man was placed in the favored spot as an overseer of the Almighty; as a caretaker of the Agricultural Elysium; but, Adam and Eve abused their stewardship, and expulsion was the price of misused privilege. *There is the account of the flood.* Sin was

rife, the creature had forgotten his subserviency to the legitimate Over Lordship of the Creator; the means had been substituted for the ends of life. Man, in his own estimation, was no longer a steward, but a possessor. Existence had degenerated into a playground for the deportment of self-gratification. The result was a wholesale deluge in which only those who acknowledged the Kingship of Jehovah were saved.

There were the Prophets: A succession of mighty men raised up to recall the unstable Israelites to a sense of their obligations to the God who had selected them to be His Chosen People. The message of these prophets, whatever the form of its expression, whatever the respective circumstances under which it was delivered, was simply this: "you are servants, not masters; lessees, not lessors. God is a jealous God; render Him under fear of destruction His lawful dues."

In the New Testament we are under the domain of the same idea: Man is a steward; all that he has, all that he is, belongs to God. What he possesses is possessed in trust for another. He is utterly deficient in propriety rights; he is the tenant, another is the Landlord. The Parables are saturated with this theme; a man's individual responsibility to God. Witness the Parable of the Unjust Steward, and the Parable of the Pounds. And this thought is not merely bare and absolute;

it is amplified and relative. For that which a man has in trust he must some day render an explicit statement. As steward he is ultimately to be called upon for a complete and detailed account. In the picture of the last judgment, when the agelong multitudes are gathered together at the great Assize, and the Judge the irrefutable arbiter of merit and demerit is seated upon the throne, the ultimate destiny of man is based upon the use that the individual has made of opportunity. The bestowal of heaven or hell resides in the words, "Inasmuch as ye did it, and inasmuch as ye did it not."

And, not only Christ's Words, but also His Work, not only His Preaching, but the incidents of His Ministry, emphasize the same conception. He spake with authority and not as the scribes. He made fundamental claims with no appearance of affectation, but in an attitude of indisputable sincerity. He walks along the shores of Galilee and sees three fishermen, James and John, and their father Zebedee, in a boat, mending their nets, and He says, "Follow me, and I will make you to become Fishers of Men." How could such a command escape impertinence; to call upon two sons in the presence of their father to abandon their accepted vocation for another? The only apology is this: Christ was the Owner of their lives, and the earthly parent was at best a Viceroy.

He passes on further, and He sees a man named Levi sitting at the Receipt of Custom. He looks into his eyes; He beckons with His hand, and issues His command, "Follow me," "leave your ill gotten gains, the spoils that you have accumulated through unpatriotic specialization; forsake immediately a lucrative vocation, and follow me." He is the Owner of that man's life, and all that he has is to be employed in His service. Instances such as these are multiplied in the Gospel narrative. Jesus ministered to men, to the sinful and the sick, to the sorrowful, and even to those whom He quickened from the dead, upon the underlying presumption, brooking no denial, that the individual, and all that he or she possessed, belonged to Him. Ownership upon the one side, and stewardship upon the other side; that is the emblazoned shield upon which is engraven the rationale of the revelation of God in Christ.

Wherein is the claim of ownership justified?

(1) *In that God created man, and in His Image:* The demands engendered by this fact are illustrated by that particular occasion when the Herodians and the Pharisees conspired together by subtlety to entangle Jesus in His talk. They propound a query which they consider to be unanswerable. Rubbing their hands in gleeful expectation of confounding the youthful pretender they ask the question: "Is it lawful to give tribute unto

Caesar, or not?" If He says "yes," then He satisfies the Herodians, at the expense of the enmity of the Pharisees. If He says "no," then He throws in His lot with the Pharisees, and incurs the hostility of the Herodians. Christ escapes the dilemma. He asks for a penny. He holds it up to the light, and pointing with His finger to the image and superscription, asks, "Whose head is that?" They answer, "Caesar's head." And he replies, "Render, therefore, unto Cæsar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's." In other words, "This piece of money is Caesar's, because it is marked with his mark, and you are God's because you bear His similitude."

(2) *The Ownership of God is justified in that our very sustenance is a gift of the Divine:* We toil for livelihood. The farmer sows and reaps, the laborer digs and enjoys, the mechanic manipulates and executes, the artisan strives and accomplishes, the merchant plans and prosecutes, the professional man schemes and puts his theory into practice, and we speak of the rewards of industry, and claim these rewards as our own possession. But the very talents that enable production belong to God, "unto one He *gave* five talents, to another two, and to another one." Moreover, the very results are within His gift of bestowal. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the

cattle upon a thousand hills." "The silver and the gold are mine."

(3) *God owns because He redeems:* We had wandered from the narrow way that leads into the Kingdom; we had reached the far country, separated from the Father's house; we were immersed in a parody of life, sunk fathoms deep in a caricature of opportunity, and then, "God so loved the world that He gave His only Begotten Son to the end that all who believe in Him should not perish." That is the historical fact of wholesale redemption. Then there is the perpetuated individual application, "If any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, and He is the propitiation for our sins." That is to say we are no longer our own, we are bought with a price, "We are, therefore, to glorify God in our bodies which are God's." So, in creation, in maintenance, and in salvation, we are God's; and, thus, in personality, in wealth, and in grace, our office is that of stewards.

"It is required among stewards that a man be found faithful." The demand of stewardship is faithfulness. Thank God that the emphasis is placed there. We are not called upon to be successful stewards, nor clever stewards, nor resourceful stewards. Some could be one or the other; a few could be all three; but the preponderating majority of men and women could be neither. We

are to be *faithful* stewards. This gives us all a chance. It places the employee upon the same plane with the employer; the servant upon the same plane with her mistress; the stupid man upon the same platform with the scholar. God expects faithfulness in the individual life. There is to be a square between aptitude and opportunity, between capacity and circumstances.

God expects faithfulness in the home: Above all else it seems to me that this is required to-day. The problems of our streets would be minimized if parents were true to their trust. Girls go wrong, and boys are bestial, largely owing to lack of parental supervision. Where in purity's name are the mothers and the fathers of the little more than children who parade our city streets after nightfall, prey to the machinations of sensual men? Where is the fidelity of God's Vicegerents to whose trust He has imposed the safety and the nurture of immortal souls?

God looks for faithfulness in business: To faithlessness here is largely due the warfare between capital and labor; the hatred of class for class. Employers say, "it is hard to-day to procure an honest workman. Unless your eye is forever fixed upon him he scamps his work. There is no sense of stewardship; time is forever being wasted, and the letter rather than the spirit of endeavor is adhered to." Employees say, "It is hard to dis-

cover a faithful boss. We are imposed upon, we are treated as chattels, rather than as reasonable human beings. We are regarded as machines, and if we fall short of the required toll we are cast aside." The trouble is this: Men have not grasped the fact that they are the stewards of one another. There is a lack of honest consideration upon either side. It is required of the capitalist, it is required of the workingman, that he be found faithful.

God demands faithfulness in a Nation: We hear a great deal nowadays about the magnitude of American resources; about our wealth of field and mine and forest; about our flowing acres of golden wheat; about our rivers, and our seas stocked with commissariat for the multitudes. The future, we say, agricultural, mineral, marine, and industrial, is ours. And so, pride is engendered, and a sense of self-sufficiency, and an attitude of over weening self-conceit, until we actually imagine that these treasures, realized and prospective, are our own possessions, to be utilized, and exploited, as we consider to be advantageous to ourselves.

These things belong to God, and if gratitude is absent, and consciousness of awe inspiring responsibility, the verdict of Heaven upon our nation will ultimately be the verdict pronounced upon the worldly husbandman in the gospel, "*God* says, Thou fool, thy soul is required of thee."

Yes: it is *required among stewards that a man be found faithful.* What we have innately, or externally as a matter of acquired acquisition, is to be used not for our selfish gratification, but in the service of the Master, in the spread of His Kingship among the children of men.

If a man gives me money to invest for him, and I usurp the interest, and place the dividends in my own pocket, I am no longer a trustee, I am no more a steward, I am a thief. There are men "doing time" in the penitentiaries of this country to-day for this very behavior. So, what we have and what we are, is an investment of God, and we are to render to Him the legitimate proceeds. Life is an investment; neither more nor less. But life is something more than an investment. We are not only to invest our capital; that is ourselves plus our opportunities, for Christ; but we are to make the best possible investment, we are to receive the greatest possible returns for the outlay. If you entrust a large sum to me, and say, "Put it out at the best advantage," and I employ it at 5 per cent. when I might have employed it with perfect safety at 6 per cent., I am an unfaithful steward. We have only one life to invest, only one opportunity for accumulated profits; the yesterdays and the to-days will never more return, chances will never again be duplicated. So we have no time to trifle, no occasion for slackness. We must

make the most we possibly may in the time and circumstances at our disposal.

But, you say: Granted that we are stewards, and that we are under the ownership of God, granted that we are to invest our talents and our opportunities, how amid the maze of openings around us are we to make the preëminent investment? *Ask Moses:* He was brought up as the special charge of a King's daughter. His boyhood and youth were passed amid the worldly advantages of Court Life. He was educated as a gentleman of Egypt. He had prospects of earthly advancement, and lucrative, authoritative position. Surely his future was chiseled. But, no; one day he looked abroad upon the world outside the palace gates, and in the sun scorched fields he beheld his countrymen in the bondage of slavery. And so he turned his back upon his glowing prospects, and threw in his lot with suffering humanity. *Did it pay?* From a temporal standpoint, no, but from an eternal standpoint triumphantly, yes. If Moses had followed the line of least resistance, and walked the way that was marked out for him to walk, he might be interesting to-day as a mummy, but not as the world's great labor leader, and as the immortal emancipator of the chosen people.

Ask St. Paul: Read that voluminous third chapter of the Philippians. See what his scholastic privileges were. Mark his education

at the feet of the illustrious Gamaliel. Realize that he had before him a career sufficient to dazzle any man; that the highest offices in Church and state beckoned to his preëminent ability. But he cast it all aside at the call of his persecuted Master, and went into Asia Minor, and into Europe, preaching the Gospel of the Cross. *Did it pay?* In the eyes of men, no; but in the eyes of Paul and God, everlastingly, yes. Nothing else could have paid. It was the one investment commensurate with his qualifications. "I count all things loss for the excellency of Christ Jesus, my Lord."

Ask Grenfell: He was reared in the lap of privilege. Through influence and his own inherent gifts he might have become a leading physician in the old country, a Rabbi in the medical profession. But he heard the call of the fishermen of Labrador, and he repudiated position and civilization that he might attain the likeness of Jesus Christ, his God. *Did it pay?* Ah, my friends, does anything else pay; is anything else really worth while? Ask David Livingstone, ask Carey, ask General William Booth, ask Jane Addams, ask all the men and women who have devoted their lives to the service of their fellow-men. They will tell you how to invest, and inform you in the sincerity of Joy unearthly, that it is the one investment for a life.

Look about you; open your eyes that you may

see; behold on every hand the burdens of men, crushed as men are beneath the weight of adverse circumstances, and invest your life for the welfare of your fellow-men. Oh, how can so many of our women skim the surface of life, and live butterfly existences; how can so many of our young men absorb their manhood in tawdry self-seeking; when in this our day and generation the calls of God are sounding on every side; when there is "so much to do, and so little time to do it in?"

Let us see to it that we *serve,* and that as stewards we are found faithful.

THE DESIRE TO SEE JESUS

St. John 12: 21. "Sir, we would see Jesus."

THE context is familiar. Certain Greeks, who had heard in their distant homes of Jesus Christ, and were anxious to test by their own experience the truth of the extravagant claims made on His behalf, came to Philip in Jerusalem at the time of the Passover Festival, and said: "Sir, we would see Jesus." It was a significant incident as viewed in connection with the universal application of Christianity; that it was not merely a revival within the borders of ancient Judaism, but a Catholic Gospel, as wide and far-reaching as the needs of humanity. But the deepest value of the enquiry for all ages, and for all people, was that it exemplified a perpetuated desire of the human heart; as fresh and vibrant in each and every generation as in the moment of its initial utterance.

"Sir, we would see Jesus." (1) *There is the world outside the Church:* It is borne in upon the understanding of every Church member who thinks

at all, that there are many people who care nothing for Christianity as a system, as an organized society, but who, at the same time, feel the necessity for God in their lives, and are amenable to the fascination of Jesus Christ. These people, hungering and thirsting, consciously or unconsciously, after a faith to live by, and when occasion demands to die by, look at the Church members of their acquaintance with this interrogation in their eyes, "Sirs, we would see Jesus. You are, presumably, the possessors of His richest blessings, you are, self-confessed, the privileged partakers of His Life; we would see the Christ in you, so that all that we have heard of Him, and all that we have yearned of Him, may assume the proportions of a militant advocacy, and command the allegiance of our hearts and minds."

This is, undoubtedly, the pragmatical spirit of the age, and, as this is the best age that has ever dawned upon the world, say what we may, there is much in the attitude that is admirable, and to be commended. Results are the order of the day; everything is gauged by the effect produced; and the same criterion is being applied to religion. Men are tired of the gossamer dreams of theological absurdities, and have come to lay the emphasis upon conduct to the exclusion of all else. Show us your life, man says to man.

To be logical, we may, of course, protest that

Christ is Christ whatever the consistency or the inconsistency of His reputed followers; and that Christianity is to be judged by the saints alone, by those who have coöperated to the full with Christian opportunities; but the fact remains that the non-church-going multitude have the right to expect in us a depth of vision, and a wealth of goodness, which shall cause them to take notice of us that we have been with Jesus.

Let us look at the matter in a practical way: It is altogether impossible for the priest to enter the homes of those who are unidentified with organized Christianity, and to win over the households by pratings, however true such pratings may happen to be, upon Baptismal regeneration, the grace of the Holy Communion, justification by faith, and all the rest of generally accepted ecclesiastical vocabulary. He must have a character to exhibit; a character fostered in the Church which is superior to characters fostered outside the Church. He must be able to say: "Sirs, ye would see Jesus? Then, come with me, and I will show Him to you. I have a number of people, men and women, in whom you will see His Similitude; in their voices you will recognize His Voice; in their faces you will see the light that never was on land and sea. Come with me out of these non-godly surroundings, and I will introduce you to my Hot House Plants in the Church of God." If the priest may not say

that, and produce the evidence that proves his words, then to that degree and extent the salvation of the world is at stake, and the advent of the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ is retarded in its consummation. Just so long as men and women are able to say with justice, "Why should I go to church; I know people who are prominent in the churches, and their standard of honesty in business, and their behavior in society, are beneath the measurements which I set myself", then, just so long may the Pope issue his encyclicals, and preachers rave to the verge of hysteria; the world at large will be individualistic, self-complacent, and mundane, of the earth earthy.

If the salt has lost its savor it is useless, and only fit to be trampled beneath the feet of men. If the leaven has lost its raising properties the whole lump will remain unpalatable, and unleavened. We must see to it, then, my friends, that we never degenerate into mere formalists; that we never come to church from habit rather than from spiritual inclination. For people are looking at us. We would be surprised to know how many people are looking at us; and our life, our conduct, not our doctrinal assertiveness, are influencing the men and women who do not profess to have ever seen Jesus Christ.

(2) *There is the world inside the Church:* Remember I am trying to be thoroughly simple,

and desperately practical. There is the world inside the Church. *What is it that the congregation asks from their minister?* Surely this: "Sir, we would see Jesus." This, of course, has to do with the preaching of the Gospel. The preacher must preach Christ, the saving truths of His Life, His Death, His Resurrection, and His abiding companionship with man; and, as governed by his ability, in such glowing terms that the Living Jesus will be seen and felt. "I have seen Jesus, Jesus working, hoping, loving; I have been at the foot of the Cross with Mary and John, and the little group of faithful friends, and seen the Master die; I have been on Olivet, and seen the Saviour ascending to His Father's Home, with hands outstretched in blessing", that is the true appreciation of a sermon. But the requisite is wider than this: The congregation demands that the minister shall show Christ in his life. As someone has said, "the world will only begin to take Christianity seriously when the clergy take it seriously". The average layman and woman will not countenance for one moment a life that contradicts profession. The immoral priest, the worldly priest, is not merely in danger of losing the ability to appreciate God, but he is in immanent peril of losing his means of livelihood. People in this century care little for apostolic succession, they look for a succession of apostolic virtues. The vision of the pure in heart

is thought more of than the mechanical validity of ordination. "Sir, we would know, not your university degree, not the length of your phylacteries, we would know if you really mean what you say; if your week-days harmonize with your Sundays. In truth, Sir, we would see Jesus; the uncompromising Judge of His fellow-men, as well as the compassionate forgetter of their imperfections."

Then, to pass to the other side of the matter: What is, or at any rate, what should be the consuming ambition of the priest with regard to his congregation? Not merely to have his church filled to capacity, to have every available pew rented to the most propitious tenant, to have the finances of the institution in excellent shape. All these things are to be desired; they show which way the wind is blowing; they may be outward and visible signs of an inward grace that possesses one and all; they are calculated to refresh the energies of a man whose profession calls for an alarming expenditure of nervous force; but if this were all, why, then, the priest might as well be an actor, or the promoter of a secular club; for in such callings, good houses and a paying concern, would undoubtedly be his heritage. The great object for which he works is spiritual results. All else is subordinated to that. Nothing else counts. Is Christ becoming a potent personality among his parishioners; are people bet-

ter at the end of the year than they were at the beginning; is there a bigger courage for the campaign of living, and a more pronounced equanimity in the face of inevitable death; have the multitudinous sermonizings produced any visible revolution in the atmosphere of the parochial family; are people kinder, and less critical than they used to be; has the constant reception of the Blessed Sacrament fed the spiritually starving into the semblance of health, and nurtured the saints to greater holiness of life? These are the questions that he asks, and upon the answers he measures the failure or the success of his ministry. "Sirs, I would see Jesus."

Let us, then, my friends, appreciate for what it is worth the practical, business-like judgment of the outside world; let us so live in the daily round, the common task, as well as in the days when the crises of existence come, that men may take note of us that we have been with Jesus; let us pray for a sacred ministry in truth, one that may reach up to the utmost requirements of God and man; and, let us so behave as Christians that the parish to which we belong may be a center of spiritual education in the community; that men and women entering our midst with the world-worn interrogation on their lips, "Sir, we would see Jesus," may find Jesus there.

STICKING TO IT

Ephesians 6: 13. "Having done all, to stand."

THE writer was speaking to a Canadian friend recently about the prospects of Allied victory in this present European war. He enumerated the disastrous Gallipoli campaign, or expedition, in its roll call of one hundred thousand dead; the failure of the French and English contingents despatched to Greece to check the German-Bulgarian invasion of Servia, etc., etc., as instances of Franco-British incompetency. He dilated upon the panoramic stupidity of the conduct of the war to date by the armies and governing powers of the Entente Nations in true layman vituperative eloquence; for his heart was temporarily sick, sick unto death, of the slowness of the victory of the cause which he considers to be the cause of democracy, and humanity. His friend answered the various charges in detail, and minimized the force of current and past disasters, and then summed up his exhortatory statements with this striking phrase, "You know we

Britishers may make mistakes, as a matter of fact we are prone to make mistakes, *but we never give in.*" He was right. Whatever we may or may not think of the happenings of the recent thirty-months so far as England and the English are concerned, we must confess that the Bulldog is an apt and true symbol of the English character, and that history is a commentary upon the truism that an Englishman never knows when he is beaten, and so is seldom, if ever, thoroughly vanquished. "We may make mistakes, *but* we never give in."

The writer had the privilege of spending several years of his life at the University of Oxford. Although at that time a physical weakling himself, and unable to take any part in athletic sports, he was from previous experience, and innate predilection, deeply interested in all that appertains to physical prowess. Eights Week, when the twenty-six colleges in the University of Oxford contend for the rowing mastery of the river, was always a delight to him, and he was year by year an interested spectator of the herculean tests of strength upon the Isis. The unfailing wonder of the competitive races to him was always the way in which the eight in each boat put their unlimited, and uttermost, muscle and grit into the task that they had in hand. Backs were bent, arms were strained, and hearts were pumped to breaking point from the beginning of the race to the finishing line. This

was so marked that when the goal was reached every man in every shell was in a fainting condition; as the saying is, "he was rowed out"; and resuscitation was achieved by a brief resting, bent backed, over the oar, and a merciful splashing of water over the steaming bodies of the oarsmen by brothers less fatigued than their fellows. It was bad form for the individual to reach the winning or the losing post in any other than an obviously exhausted condition. It meant that he had not put his last ounce of capacity into the effort to bring his boat to victory. Whether the progress of the race had been a progress of failure, or otherwise, it made no difference in the strenuosity of the exertions of the rower; whether the coxswain had steered a good course or a bad course the attitude of doing one's best was the same; there was a *stick-to-it-ness* about the whole performance that was, to say the least, an inspiration to the idle onlooker, and a source of unalloyed admiration of his fellowman. There was pluck, there was a "do it, if I die" atmosphere; there was an unswerving tenacity of purpose that warmed the cockles of one's heart, and made one realize the cause of British dominion in the four quarters of the world.

The average Englishman, as judged by our standards, may have but little sense of humor; he may appear at times childlike in the simplicity of his faith and conviction; he may seem unfeeling,

and scarcely human, in his suppression of emotion; *but* he is possessed of a pertinacity of resolve, he is enamoured of a consistency of purpose, that compensate for whatever may appear to be lacking in originality of conception, and brilliancy of execution. He never gives in, and he holds on like grimmest death itself. This is, of course, seeking a national illustration of the truth which the writer would enforce, and is devoid in intention of any special pleading for the Englishman as differentiated from the American or the Hottentot.

Here is an individual instance of the adhesive quality, which we are writing about, and which we intend shortly to apply to the religious life. There was *a case* in one of the Toronto hospitals a few years ago which had baffled the ingenuity of diagnosis, and the skilfulness of treatment, of many leading physicians of the Queen City. A man of sixty years of age was wasting away day by day, losing strength hourly, and approximating visibly the vanishing point of vitality. He was in the public wards, and was, so far as his past was concerned, a stranger to all involved. It was impossible to discover by the minutest physical examination, frequently repeated, what was the matter with him. It chanced that at that time Sir William Osler, Regius Professor of Medicine in the University of Oxford, well known in this country through his lengthy connection with the Johns

Hopkins University, and his post prandial jest of the advisability of chloroforming people of a certain age, was in Canada, and in the city of Toronto. He was called in by some of his medical confrères to give his opinion of the elusive patient who was outwitting in his malady the science of the superintendent, and assistants, or house doctors, of the particular hospital of which we speak. He looked the man over thoroughly; tapped and pummelled him in true, and approved fashion; enquired into his family history, and gained through cross-questioning an accurate knowledge of his life's habits. Then to the interested interrogation of his fellow-physicians he pronounced this verdict, "The man is dying of want of a drink"! Alcohol, in graded doses, would have, in his opinion, saved the man's life. The remedy was suggested forcibly to the patient, and it was expected that he would readily fall in with the proposed cure. But, no; the man refused to take a drink even if his life depended upon it. He had been a drunkard for many years; then he had seen the error of his ways, and had determined to eradicate the habit whatever the consequences. He was willing to forfeit his life to have the privilege of dying sober. That was an instance of individual *stick-to-it-ness* that was surely commendable from a moral and a religious standpoint. It is an instance that has often been duplicated in the writer's knowledge in the case of

victims from the morphine and drug habits. Such sternness of resolution must undoubtedly go a long way in redeeming the record of a misspent past in the estimation of the Judge of all the world who ever doeth right!

Now this same persistency of behavior which we have illustrated nationally and individually, and of course, it would be possible to multiply instances *ad infinitum*, is conspicuous upon all sides; we know men in business, and in professional life who go upon the principle that "dogged does it," who rise superior to all rebuffs, and shadowing of circumstance, and hold to their purpose of achievement "through thick and thin." We know women, delicate, frail women who are rearing families in the face of all conceivable adversity, and holding to their responsibilities in the vortex of perpetuated oppositions, financial and otherwise. It is our knowledge of, and acquaintance with, these submerged heroisms, for they are heroisms seldom alluded to by the heroes and heroines themselves and little known outside the immediate circle of their friendships, that give the salt life, and the flavor that makes existence palatable, and appreciated. The firmament of secular life is literally strewn with these light giving stars which enervate the darkness of terrestrial experience, and give us courage to endure the monotonies of the daily round, the common task.

But, how is it with the Religious Skies; are they irradiated with shining examples of consistent persistency, and emblazoned with fixed points of illuminative fortitude of purpose? Would that we could answer "yes" in all sincerity, and with pronounced emphasis of conviction. The fact is that, speaking generally, the *stick-to-it-ness* of secular life is not conspicuous to the same degree and extent in religious life; that people who will follow prosperity through the valleys and over the mountains of material obstructions will take fright at a molehill or a ditch that confronts them in their pilgrimage from self to God. This is the altogether appalling weakness of the exhibition of Christianity in the world. People assume Christian obligations and they do not carry them out for any appreciable length of time; they are forever blowing hot and cold; they take a stand, and then, instead of running the race that is set before them they are unaccountably sitting upon the banks along the roadside impervious to all promptings and proddings of revivication; they set their hand to the plow, and just when you expect a well-turned furrow of endeavor, richly tossed and fragrant with possibility, they are looking back, and so proving themselves unworthy of the kingdom of God.

There is Confirmation: There is no time, perhaps, in the Christian life when hearts are more susceptible to the promptings of conscience, and

when people are more resolutely determined to do the right at all costs. There is a self-conscious dedication of the personality to God, and a "woe is me" if I do not consistently follow the light that never was on land and sea. And yet—what is the experience of the average parish priest? It is an experience vouched for by the writer who just before leaving a former field of work looked over his confirmation records of the previous eight years and discovered that, eliminating deaths and removals, only some 45 per cent. of those whom he had prepared for Confirmation were systematic communicants of the Church, and faithful in their observance of Churchly duties. Lapsed communicants—why, the phrase comprises the great heart-ache of the ordinary clergyman's life. The "never-give-in," and the "stick-to-it" are conspicuous by their absence.

There is Church Work: It is true that in every parish the number of people actively engaged in the organizational life of the parish is altogether disproportionate to the enrolled membership. Somehow or other men and women feel that Christianity is something to get rather than to give, and that a receptive attitude is all that is demanded. But, the greatest difficulty in parish work is not due to the fact that comparatively few people come forward and offer themselves for the organized activities of the local church, it is that those who

do undertake definite responsibilities in this connection fail to persist in their efforts. There are those who are the embodiment of fidelity, who are always to be found in their places doing their allotted work; they are the backbone of the institutional side of every parish's life, and great is their reward in heaven. But, there are so many people who join this or that society; who persevere for a time, and then in some mysterious fashion lose their enthusiasm and sense of consecration to the work, and fall away into desuetude. In thinking of them one is always reminded of a particular class of hearers in the Master's Parable of The Sower: "They on the rock are they which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a *while* believe, and in time of temptation fall away."

There is Church Attendance: It is a bad thing to harp upon the subject of church attendance, and fortunately in many churches it is unnecessary so to do; it is a bad thing to harp upon it because there is an ill-concealed belief, and, perhaps, well founded, that the priest is an advocate for the maintenance of his self-respect in so doing, and also because church attendance is not by any means the only criterion of the Christian enthusiasm of Christians; but the way in which people come to church when they feel like it, and stay away from the church when they feel like it;

the way in which they are to be seen in their pews at intervals, and then, for no apparent reason, are not to be seen in their pews at all; is one of the insoluble problems of human nature capable of elucidation by a psychologist alone! There is a coming and a going; there is a staying and a staying away; there is a heat, a luke-warmness, and an icy frigidity of performance, that bewilder the mentality of the man who would seek to decipher the cryptic conundrum. Imagine any one in his or her senses saying, "I never give in in church attendance, rain or shine, sound health or indispostion, good preacher or poor; I am always in my place of a Sunday!" Imagine anyone in his or her senses saying "I always stick to the performance, the external performance, of my churchly obligations; unlet or unhindered by serious illness, I never miss a service on the Sabbath!" Why, it is hard to imagine such an utterance, or such utterances, proceeding from the lips of anyone. It carries a suggestion of the time when the lion and the lamb shall lie down together, and a little child shall lead all the opposing forces of humanity in perfect union and accord, and the sun of the Millenium shall have arisen upon the near horizon!

Now, the question arises: *Why is it that people in general have so little adhesiveness in the Christian life?* It seems to the writer that the answer is twofold, and that the first division includes the

second. First, those who give in, and who do not stick to it, in the Christian life, are not sufficiently in earnest in their profession. The Englishman is going to do his best to win this war, he is not going to despair whatever the adverse circumstances aimed against final victory, because he is, and he knows it, fighting for national honor, and for life itself. He counts no sacrifice too great, no loss, even the loss of life, to pay for a satisfactory adjustment of eventualities. The oarsman at Oxford exhausts his physical force and his nervous energy to the uttermost, because he would win over his opponent at all costs, and deems conquest sufficient compensation for all temporary discomfort of arm and limb, of heart and back. The reformed drunkard was willing to die rather than resort to the use of spiritous liquors which had held him in a galling servitude for years because he considered death preferable to the thraldom of a pernicious habit. He had rather die as a freeman than live as a slave. So with all those men and women who count difficulties but dross to be cast on one side in order that they may achieve success, and prosperity of living. They were, and they are, in uncompromising earnest seeking the goal which they account worthy of all batterings of fortune or circumstance, and for which they are willing to forego all primrose paths of dalliance. A like earnestness in our Christian

convictions would lead to an expression of similar indomitability. If we really felt that the one thing worth while would be to be found in the likeness of Christ Jesus our Lord, and to seek preëminently the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, we would not be dismayed, nor swerved from our intention, whatever the opposition arrayed against the consummation of our hearts' desire. We are not thoroughly in earnest, that is the trouble, we are not sufficiently convinced of the superlative efficacy of pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. We are half-hearted, thin-souled, and anaemic-minded in our Christian calling. Someone has said "Christianity has never been tried." There is more than a modicum of truth in the statement. The reason that Christianity has never been tried is because Christians are not sufficiently Christianized; they are not impressed and obsessed with the all-importance of the Christian interpretation of life. They are endeavoring to bolster up a compromise between time and eternity, between the body and the soul, between God and mammon, and the attempted compromise vitiates that enthusiasm, that persistent enthusiasm, that rises superior to all inimical agencies. The only dream worth dreaming, and the only vision worth seeing, is the dream that is not dreamed through, and the vision that stops short of synthetic fulfilment.

The other reason why people are transients rather than citizens in the City of the Christian Life, and it is included in the foregoing, is that it is desperately hard to be a Christian at the best of times, and, humanly speaking, impossible to be a Christian at the worst of times. There is no warfare like unto the warfare of the flesh against the spirit; there is no subjugation so blood-letting as the conquest of wild beasts at Ephesus. What we would we do not, and that which we would not, we do. The strife is fierce; the wrestling is against principalities and powers in high places; and our opponent is the prince of the power of the air, we breathe him, and he surrounds us on all sides. Our motive is willing, but our practice is perforce weak. It all comes back, you see, to a question of the quality and intensity of our earnestness. If we are strong we may utilize our strength to the uttermost, and, moreover, such is our doctrine, and with many of us our experience, we have a strength to call upon which is not our own. "His grace is sufficient for us; and His Strength is made perfect in weakness." Give me a man as earnest in his Christian life as he is in his business life; who overcomes by sheer force of character all the impediments that beset the accomplishment of his secular purposes; and I will show you a man who by the Help of God will come triumphantly through all the obstructions that hinder his progress from

earth to heaven. It is all a matter of conviction, and realization; conviction of the supreme desirability of being, despite everything, a Christian, and a realization of the horses and chariots of fire which surround Elisha.

"Sticking to it." Let us take these words out of their cold print, and vivify them in our heart and life. Whatever may be said of us, truthfully or falsely, when we come to die, let our friends have the privilege of saying, and our enemies have the unhappiness of being compelled to admit: *"He never gave in."* "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed forevermore, knoweth that I lie not."

What an epitaph to travel down along the ages! What an example of *stick-to-it-ness* to you and to me!

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